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CD32

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game reviewed

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ALIENS HAVE INVADDED YOUR WORLD...GO MAKE 'EM REGRET IT!

BANSHEE



Take a classic arcade game. Add a whole heap of seasoning in the form of stylish, state-of-the-art graphics and four MASSIVE levels of up-to-date action. Stir in an Alternative Dimension, exquisitely evil aliens and a heavy-sprinkling of mucho-big guns 'n' power-propped planes. Leave to simmer on an incandescent heat and wait for the best BLAST in light years.



TOP DOWN VERTICALLY SCROLLING VIEW! CHOICE OF THREE DIFFICULTY LEVELS! FULLY ROTATING RAY-TRACED ENEMIES!

Available on: Amiga 1200 and Amiga CD32



CORE
DESIGN LIMITED

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ISSUE 2 • WINTER 1994

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SOCCER KID



GUARDIAN



MARVIN



LOST EDEN



CANNON FODDER



BUBBLE & SQUEAK



EMERALD MINE

MM **GAMES**
MASTER

FREE

**COLLECTABLE
LION KING
BADGE AND
MASSIVE-
DOUBLE-SIDED
POSTER**

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Welcome to the second issue of *Amiga CD32*. The response to our first edition was tremendous. And we have had countless phone calls in the *Amiga Format* offices asking when the next issue was coming out. Well, here it is and I think it's great, but then I would, wouldn't I?

We have a cornucopia of delights in store for you, with lots of new CD32 games reviewed plus we've taken a look at some of the best games that have been around for the last couple of months.

We also have tips for *Heimdall 2* and *Cannon Fodder* and previews of *The Lost Eden* and our fabulous cover game, *Alien Breed 2: Tower Assault*. And lots more! Enjoy!



Sue Grant, Editor.

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WHAT'S ON YOUR AMIGA CD32 COVERDISC



HOW TO USE YOUR COVERDISC

You've got the magazine, you've got a CD³², so all you need to do is pull the disc off the front cover and bung it in the machine. After a few seconds of disc accessing you will see the main menu. If you can't see the main menu you have forgotten to turn the power on! From this menu you can hop around to the sub-menus where you will, no doubt to your delight, discover PD games, graphics, music tracks and MPEG movies.

Exciting games

When you want to change from one game to another on the disc, reboot the machine and hold down the requisite button. The best way to

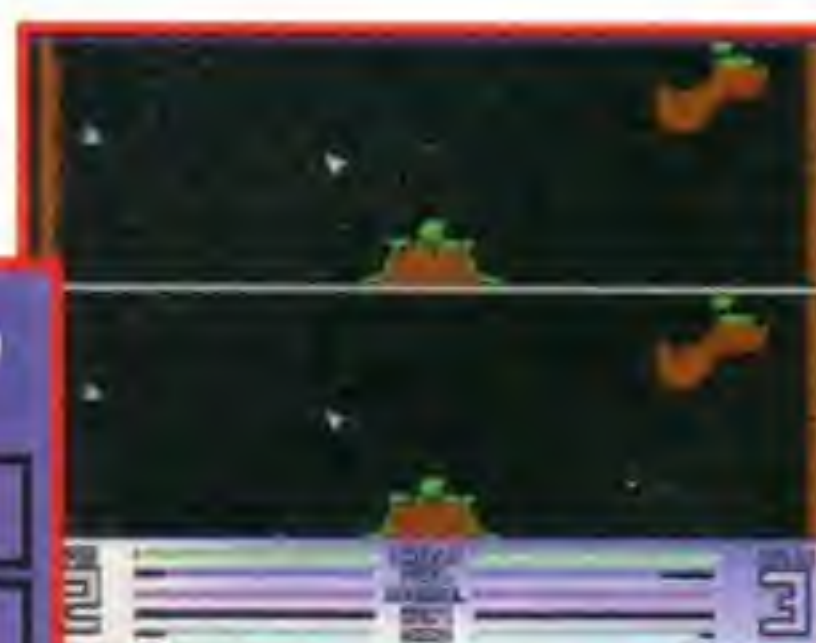
reboot is to lift the lid for a couple of seconds – this clears the memory completely – and then replace it.

Using the other parts of the disc

If you want to access the other areas of the disc, boot up **WITHOUT** holding down any buttons and you will be presented with the main menu screen – use the pad and the red button to flick around.

One of the finest games we've seen this year is *Gravity Force 2* and yes, it's in the PD games section, as is the glorious *Deluxe Galaga 2.3*. These two games will last as long as your CD³² itself. The PD games can be

selected from the PD Games menu. On the same menu screen, you can access a variety of graphic images, books and music tracks.



Gravity Force 2 is one of the most playable games to appear this year.

You can click through all the menu options using the red button.

ACCESSING THE DEMOS

When you want to play the GAME demos, use the following procedure. When you boot up the disk, hold down the coloured buttons to go straight into a particular demo as follows:

Red: Kid Chaos

Red and Reverse: Arcade Pool

Yellow and Reverse: Wembley International Soccer

Blue: Banshee

Blue and Reverse: Superfrog

Blue and Forward: Cannon Fodder

Green: Bubble 'n' Squeak

Green and Reverse: Marvin's Marvellous Adventure

Green and Forward: Top Gear 2



ARCADE POOL

■ TEAM 17

Once every so often, a ridiculously simple, yet incredibly playable game comes along. And *Arcade Pool* is such an example. You get a top-down perspective of a pool table – a full view of the table is always on screen – a load of pool balls and options to adjust the speed of your shot and the position you hit the white ball for spin, stun and side. And that's it.

The game itself is easy to pick up but not so simple to perform with aplomb because even though you have an aiming tool to aid accuracy, *Arcade Pool* requires pinpoint accuracy. The full game offers a variety of pool games including British and American games, Speed Pool (you must pot nine balls as quickly as possible) and there is even a special Trick Shot mode where you can attempt positively Virgoian feats.

In our demo, you take on the computer player at American eight-ball pool in a two minute game. The red button directs the ball while the blue whacks it, but if you wish, you can use a mouse. You'll need practice to beat these guys.

Team 17's *Arcade Pool* is the most playable of pool games around. Change the speed of your shot by clicking on the red bar and click on the ball icon for stun.



CANNON FODDER

■ VIRGIN

One of the best, and indeed, best-selling computer games of all time, Sensible Software's *Cannon Fodder* requires both speed of reaction and joystick dexterity. You take charge of a bunch of minuscule soldiers and are required to perform a number of tasks to complete a certain mission. This could involve sneaking through woods to blow up enemy huts while avoiding sniper fire, or perhaps sliding across icy wastes in search of a skidoo, or even unloading a missile or two at an enemy chopper. But whatever you're doing, *Cannon Fodder* is fun with a capital F.

And now this game is available for the CD32 and our demo has three missions to tackle. Use the pad to direct your men, the red button to move the men around and the blue button to fire your guns. You can separate the soldiers by clicking on the snake icon, and collecting the small brown packing cases enables you to chuck bombs and missiles; release the extra weapons by pressing the blue button shortly followed by the red. Alternatively, you can use a mouse. Go to it!

If you want to split up your troops, click on the snake icon. When you want them to get back together, walk one towards the others and they join as a team.



SUPERFROG

■ TEAM 17

One One day there was a prince. A prince fortunate enough to resemble Shaggy from *Scooby Doo*, a prince deeply in love with a beautiful princess. But the path of true love doth not run smooth and an evil witch decided to turn the poor prince into a frog, probably just for a bit of a laugh. But the frog became Super and set out to traverse a great platform world in order to resume his life as Shaggy and marry the comely maiden.

Team 17's *Superfrog* is a classic platformer, with vast worlds to conquer, secret and bonus levels to discover and even the odd fruit machine to gamble on. You have to squash the baddies and collect the gold coins before making your way to the exit. And at the end of the levels you are given the option to gamble your hard-won coins on the fruit machine. They're easily frittered.

Our demo takes you straight into tricky World Four, a dangerous dungeon with spikes and moving walls. The pad directs our hero while you can use the red button to fire certain pick-ups.

You don't need us to tell you to avoid the spikes. But *Superfrog* has far more to contend with later on in his quest to turn back into a prince and get his princess.

BUBBLE 'N' SQUEAK

AUDIOGENIC

The planet Grool is not the joyous land it once was for evil reprobate Kat Of Nine Tails and his gang of nasty hooligans have taken over. Now normally, this is a situation we could comfortably let lie – after all, have you ever heard of Grool, never mind been there on a Bank Holiday weekend? But when there are two cute, cuddlesome characters who are thoroughly miserable at the proceedings, your heart rules your head and you simply know that some kind of action must be taken.

The if-they-were-soft-toys-they'd-be-sitting-by-my-pillow creatures in this case are Bubble 'n' Squeak, a small, bald Charlie Brown-wannabe and his red-nosed, caped sidekick. You have to clear the level of nasties and take your blue pal with you.

Press red to fire, blue to jump and you can command Squeak to Come On or, Wait Here by pressing the green button. And best, by directing the pad and pressing the red button you can kick Squeak right along a platform.

Bubble's pal Squeak can be a real pain when he's following you around but you can always leave him. But remember, the levels fill with water so don't go for long.



TOP GEAR 2

GREMLIN INTERACTIVE

No console machine would be complete without a driving game, and neither would a magazine demo disk. Gremlin's *Top Gear 2* is the latest in a long line of successful racing releases from the South Yorkshire softies (no offence), renowned for their Lotus series.

For one or two-players *Top Gear 2* boasts a total of 64 tracks; four in each of 16 cities in countries across the world and the emphasis is on speed, but concentration and joypad dexterity are a pre-requisite for getting to that chequered flag ahead of the chasing pack. You can choose automatic or manual gear change and there are two levels of difficulty – win a few races and you collect cash prizes enabling you to purchase some add-ons to give your motor that extra edge.

Our demo takes you to Adelaide in Australia to race against some of the hottest drivers around. And the best thing is that *Top Gear 2* is for one or two players – in two-player mode the screen splits – so you can battle it out against your best mate. Or your Mum. Direct the car with the pad and accelerate with the red button. Vroom.

Top Gear 2 is a seat-of-the-pants racing game and our demo takes you over to Australia where you drive against the world's finest. Keep your foot on the gas.



BANSHEE

CORE DESIGN

You are Sven Svardsen (No I'm not. 'Yes you are.') and the year is 1999 (No it isn't...). Earth is on a different timeline and apparently, the last two World Wars never took place. Evil going by the name of Blandak Maldrear has decided, to take over Earth and only one man and his bi-plane can stop him. Core Design's *Banshee* harbours no serious thoughts of plot though for it's a game where you shoot things. In fact you shoot everything that happens by your sights. Glorious. It's a shoot-em-up in the classic mould – the action never lets up, there are a plethora of pick-ups to collect (which you can change to your liking by shooting at them) and it has some evil end-of-level bosses to kill.

Graphically the game is stunning, the attention to detail quite superb: from the pipes gushing horrible liquids into the sea, to the woman loading along war-torn streets with her pram, to the gangsters' fine black automobiles. It's a visual feast. Direct your plane with the pad and shoot with red button. And best of all, another player can join in at any time giving you double the bi-plane action.

Beware of the bridges. Your bi-plane flies just above the ground so you must dodge in between the spans. Unloading bullets into the tank will see you through.



Kick Off



WEMBLEY INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

AUDIOGENIC

World Cup year always brings with it a host of footie games, some good, some bad and some indifferent. *Wembley International Soccer* went against the now-accepted norm of tiny sprites and top-view down and introduced a side-view (you can play top-down too) with enormous players. Audiogenic are to be applauded for trying something different and although *Wembley* isn't everyone's cup of tea, it made a change from the pile of substandard *Sensible Soccer* wannabes.

Our demo is a four minute match for one or two players and you can change the pitch view from side-on to top-down by pressing the yellow button. Most of the options don't work (many do) but you can choose from a pile of teams as well as the type of pitch you want to play on. Click on friendly and choose the teams, then click OK. To change the manager from computer to player, click on the word. The controls initially seem somewhat complicated but with a bit of practice you can perform flowing moves.

Wembley International Soccer has the biggest and best animated sprites of any CD32 football game. Take on the cream of world soccer in our exclusive demo.



KID CHAOS

OCEAN

Club-waving neanderthal kids in jeans and baseball jackets and blue jeans spell trouble. And Kid Chaos, kicked out of every cutesy platform audition for simply being too rough is out for some boover. The plot goes like this: scientists from the future have swooped the Kid from his prehistoric past to an Artificial Environment Centre and, in some of the cruellest experiments known to man, they have forced him to watch Ronnie Corbett's *Small Talk* TV programme 24 hours a day! To get out of this very hell, the Kid must batter his way through five platform worlds and complete some rather natty bonus sections based on classic arcade games in the past, including *Breakout* and *Space Invaders* clones.

Kid Chaos is certainly one of the most furious platform games around, resembling in some areas that spiky blue chap Sonic. The levels all have a time limit, some as short as 90 seconds. Our demo is the 11 minute first level; you move the Kid with the pad, and you can make him spin with the red button.

Kid Chaos is the roughest, toughest platform character of them all. He likes nothing better than to run at pace, clubbing the baddies into oblivion.



MARVIN'S MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE

21st CENTURY ENTERTAINMENT

Pizza delivery has never been a major feature of platform games. Plumbers and hedgehogs, Ninjas from the Nth Dimension and secret agent fish, yes. Pizza delivery boys, no. But fear not, for this vital ingredient in the development of the genre is upon us – Marvin's task, to deliver a large pepperoni to a kidnapped, and presumably, Hank Marvin (starving), professor.

Ninety (count 'em) levels of er, level-hopping action split over nine worlds stand in the way of the brave bearer of fine and succulent pizzas. Loads of music soundtracks, six layers of scrolling, 256 colours, bread, tomatoes, onions and olives make-up the wholesome package.

In our colourful, pacey demo you have to get Marvin through various scrapes, directing with the pad, jumping with the red button and either kicking or releasing bullets with the green button, depending on whether you collect the right pick-ups.

The only pizza delivery boy to feature in platform adventures, marvellous Marvin has the kick of the mule and the finest large pepperoni's with extra anchovies.

NEWS

They may be small, but they're perfectly formed – the *Amiga CD32* news pages, that is.

CBM IS DEAD: LONG LIVE CBM!



Reading like a script from a Greek tragedy, the last six months have been a telling time for Commodore. Jason Holborn reports on the difficulties facing the CD³²'s creators.

After months of speculation and uncertainty, the fate of the CD³² now seems assured. After the collapse of Commodore International in April, senior management figures from Commodore UK and the USA look set to take control of remaining assets in a buy-out that will see the formation of a new UK-owned Commodore.

Although the future for the CD³² and the Amiga seems bright, one aspect of the old company looks set for the chop – the Commodore name. According to sources close to the struggling computer giant, the new owners are keen to distance themselves from the old Commodore regime. As a result, Commodore will not only get a new management but a new name too. The new company is likely to be called Amiga International Inc. Capitalising on the strength of the Amiga brand name, Amiga International will concentrate solely on the development and marketing of the CD³² and the Amiga line of computers.

The management buy-out is being led by David Pleasance and Colin Proudfoot, the joint managing directors of Commodore UK, and a number of other senior Commodore US staff including Lew Eggebrecht, the brains behind much of the Amiga's highly advanced technology.

The management team's bid certainly hasn't enjoyed a smooth ride, however – not only have they had to overcome stiff competition from rival bidders such as Amstrad and Samsung, but it now appears that problems have arisen over the procurement of components and part-assembled machines lying in a factory in the Philippines.

According to reports, the Philippino government are far from pleased that they should lose such a major trading interest and are seeking a substantial financial settlement before any part of the factory is turned over to its new owners.

The delays in restarting production of the Amiga line have certainly done nothing to maintain market confidence

THE RISE AND FALL (AND RISE) OF COMMODORE

APRIL: Commodore's Autumn results spark new takeover speculation in the industry as the company turns in yet another poor showing. Despite losses amounting to £5.5 million, Commodore UK's boss David Pleasance remained bullish, saying: 'When you consider that the losses for the last quarter of 1992 were over \$70 million, it's a considerable improvement. And I firmly believe, were it not for the general softness of the industry, we would be back in profit by now.' Oh dear....

MAY: On Friday, April 29, at 4.00pm, Commodore International and Commodore Electronics both filed for voluntary liquidation with a court in the Bahamas. Commodore's main manufacturing base in the Philippines quickly ceased production of all new Amigas. Commodore UK's Colin Proudfoot was quick to cushion the blow: 'There should be no impact in the

UK marketplace.... The brand is too strong to die; we're confident that Commodore and the Amiga will come out of this a better, stronger company.'

Rumours quickly start to circulate that Commodore is up for sale. According to these rumours, potential bidders include Samsung, Amstrad, Philips, Hewlett Packard, Sony, Nintendo and even Atari!

JUNE: The promised resolution of Commodore's purchase fails to materialise. Industry watchers place Samsung as the firm favourites to snatch up the remains of Commodore, although it too is rumoured to be going through its own financial problems. Rumour has it that Samsung intend to issue cheap licences to allow third-party companies to produce cheap Amiga clones....

JULY: News leaks that senior management figures at Commodore UK plan to put together a takeover bid that

could see the transformation of Commodore into a UK-owned company with its headquarters based in Maidenhead, Berkshire. Rumour has it that Commodore UK are the only bidders interested in continuing the sale and development of the current product range – all the other bidders simply want to lay their hands on the Amiga technology for use in their own products.

AUGUST: As the fight to gain control of Commodore continues, a deadline is set for August 31. The management team behind the Commodore UK bid make it known that they intend to ditch the ill-fated Commodore logo in favour of specific Amiga branding. Although unconfirmed, it is thought that the new company will trade under the name Amiga International Inc.

News also reaches the press that the new management intend to switch its manufacturing base from the Philippines

to the UK. One new site for the company that is put forward by industry experts is the former Timex Plant in Dundee, Scotland.

SEPTEMBER: As deadline after deadline passes, Amiga International start to put the pressure on the liquidators to finalise the sell off of Commodore International's assets in order for them to start production of new stock in time for the Christmas sales. Problems arise, however, when the Philippino Government post armed guards outside Commodore's plant in the Philippines to stop an attempt to remove components and part-assembled machines.

OCTOBER: At the time of going to press, Amiga International Inc has still not been formed and the management team have yet to finalise their bid although the entire industry believes that a settlement is only days away....



David Pleasance: still hopeful that the management buy-out will succeed.

in Commodore's products. Throughout the world, dealers and distributors are reporting major shortages as the remaining stock of Amigas and CD32s begins to dry up. In the UK, in particular, leading distributors ZCL and Silica Systems have confirmed to *Amiga CD32* that they are now completely out of stock of both the Amiga A1200 and A4000, although there is still a small supply of CD32 stock available.

Despite the delays, Commodore UK's Dawn Levack confirmed to *Amiga CD32* that she felt confident that the company could still get stocks of the CD32 into the shops in time for the traditional Christmas sales boom.

What's more, the management buy-out team are already pulling together a new software bundle for the CD32 that will offer potential buyers a brand new selection of quality CD32 games. Unfortunately, Ms Levack was unable to reveal what titles the pack will offer.

Whatever direction the new company takes, the management team are confident that by concentrating on their core products (the CD32 and Amiga range) without the burden of massive overheads and a leech-like US parent company feeding on their profits, the company will be profitable within a year.

This core range of products won't stand still either – already work is progressing on a new generation of CD32 (possibly the rumoured 64-bit machine) and RISC-based Amigas, both boasting state of the art graphics and sound capabilities.

IT'S A PLAY ON WORDS

Now you can use your CD32 as a learning tool with two new French and English language discs designed to make schoolwork fun...



LCL aim to make learning French fun with their new *Micro French* package which uses film clips of actors to add interest to the language tutorial.

Oh la la! Those saucy chaps (and chapesses) at LCL have released a CD32 version of their popular teach yourself French program, *Micro French*. Although it's based on the popular Amiga version, LCL claim the CD32 version makes full use of the extended storage and audio capabilities of the CD-ROM format.

One of the titles most novel features is its use of full-screen films where live actors talk to you in French and wait for your reply before continuing the conversation. In one particular example, you get to order a meal from the dashing young waiter pictured here. The CD32 version of *Micro French* costs £34.95 and is available from LCL on (0491) 579345.

And while we're talking about educational uses for your CD32, your kids may be able to whip your butt at *Chaos Engine* but how's their English school work coming along? Designed

specifically to cater for the needs of the national curriculum, Lascelles' new *Word Construction Set* (£29.95) transforms your CD32 into a 'virtual' English teacher!

Based around the successful Amiga A1200 version, the CD32 *Word Construction Set* offers a brand new digital sound feature which, as its name suggests, allows the title to 'talk' to your child using a library of over 3,000 digital sound effects sampled from a variety of English-speaking narrators. These sampled words are used to encourage your child's reading, listening and spelling skills.

Words are spoken in the context of a visible sentence and a colourful AGA graphic is displayed depicting the meaning. *Word Construction Set* keeps a careful eye on your child's progress so you can see at a glance just how well they are doing. Lascelles can be contacted on (010) 64 6 878 9659.

DREAMWEB ON THE WAY

Restore the balance of good and evil in the world's subconscious in a chilling new graphic adventure game set for a CD32 release by the end of the year.

Empire Software have confirmed a CD32 release for their chilling graphic adventure *DreamWeb*. The eagerly-awaited game should be released by the end of the year, and it could be one of the big CD32 hits.

The game explores the delicate balance between good and evil, the key to which is held by a mysterious entity known as the DreamWeb – a subconscious stream of thought visited by people in their dreams, which is controlled by the seven nodes which can be randomly good or evil.

But the powers of evil are gaining the upper hand and the keepers of the DreamWeb call in professional assassin

Ryan (that's you that is) to track down and kill the powers of evil, restore the balance of the DreamWeb and save the world from all sorts of terrible things.

DreamWeb employs the traditional themes of point-and-click graphic adventure games with a dark and sombre atmosphere, which should be ideally suited to the CD32's amazing graphics. If the full game lives up to the promise of a demo we've seen at the *Amiga CD32* office, it's going to be quite tremendous.

DreamWeb is due to be released by the end of the year. For further information about the game, contact Empire Software on (081) 343 7337.

Stay in touch with Communicator

CD32 owners who just happen to have a spare Amiga hanging around the house can get the two talking with Eureka's new Communicator II. Comprising of a hardware unit that connects between the CD32's AUX port and the Amiga's serial port, the Communicator II allows both machines to share each other's resources.

At its very simplest level, the Communicator II provides any Amiga (not just an A1200 or A4000) with a direct link with the CD32's CD-ROM drive. This means that Amiga users can have access to the vast range of Public Domain and serious CD-ROM titles appearing on CD-ROM without having to invest several hundred pounds in a dedicated Amiga CD-ROM drive.

Your CD32 can benefit from this union too. Built into the Communicator II hardware is a standard CD32/A4000

keyboard plug and a set of three MIDI connectors which allow your CD32 to communicate with a wide range of MIDI compatible synthesisers and drum machines.

In addition, the Communicator comes complete with a CD32 disk containing Eureka's new PhotoLite package which, as its name suggests, provides the CD32 with much needed support for Kodak's PhotoCD standard. What's more, you don't need an AGA Amiga to view these pictures – although the Amiga controls what is shown on screen, it's the CD32's video hardware that handles the tricky task of displaying PhotoCD images in up to 262,144 colours.

A UK price for the Communicator II has yet to be finalised but Eureka hope to sell the unit for just £60. Contact Eureka on (010) 31 4637 0800.

Bundee jumping

When CDs were first introduced in the mid-Eighties, the makers claimed they were virtually indestructible – you could throw them about, smear them with jam, feed them to your dog and they'd still work as well as the day they were bought. As history shows, the CD didn't quite manage to live up to these over-enthusiastic claims.

If any of your CD32 discs have bitten the dust, then you'll positively rip the arms off of the nice sales people at RSD Connections Ltd. They've launched the Bundee CD3 repair kit which, RSD claim, will bring just about any defunct CD back from the grave. Consisting of everything you need to repair 50 discs, this £14.95 kit fills scratches with an optical filler which is then sealed by a protective fluid which forms a tough shield against future damage. For more information, contact RSD on (0992) 584205.

The CD32 straddles the two genres of games and videos, with the ability to play both from standard CDs. And, currently lying dormant somewhere between the two is the potential for a new breed of entertainment – less of a video game... more a game video. But before we take a look at the future, Steve Jarratt examines the here and now. Readers of *Amiga CD32* should already have a CD32 console and for around £190, you can buy Commodore's Full Motion Video (FMV) cartridge. This unimposing metal box holds the key to the future of video: the MPEG decoding chip.



MOVIES, GAMES AND VIDEOS. ♦ ♦ ♦



MOVIE EXPERT

MPEG is the acronym for the Motion Picture Experts Group – a collection of technicians well-voiced in the fields of video, electronics and communications – who were given the task of storing video on CD.

Of course, you can store video on CD already. But FMV, by its very definition, constitutes full-screen, full-colour, full-motion video, running at least 25 frames per second. You can store video on CD, but using conventional storage methods, the shiny disc is hard pressed to hold anything more than 26 second's worth of movie footage. And with today's laser technology you could only show one frame every three seconds. Hardly FMV...

So the problem that the MPEG guys faced was twofold: how to store enough video to make it a convenient medium; and how to play that footage back to FMV standards. In fact the solution to both problems is high speed compression/decompression routines which are defined by the standard known as MPEG1.

Today's CD-ROMs can hold 630Mb of data, and current CD-ROM

drives can access that data at around 150K/second. You'll probably know that the CD32 boasts a 300K/second drive, but for MPEG1 to be a standard, it had to operate to the lowest common denominator which is a transfer rate of 150K/second.

So how do you squeeze 25 frames of FMV into a 150K data stream? You compress it, that's how – by a factor of 200:1. First, you compress the sound. Human hearing isn't that sensitive, so the sound can be topped and tailed, removing high and low frequency audio and by taking out those sounds masked by louder ones. An MPEG soundtrack takes up less than one-tenth the space of a normal video soundtrack – and yet still contains all the data for full stereo and Dolby Surround effects!

FIELD WORK

Of course, compressing video is a much trickier task and was achieved using three cumulative methods. First, you reduce the resolution of each screen by a quarter, taking out every other interlaced field. Normal TV images are made up of a series of odd lines and even lines, interlaced to



show a complete picture. One field is displayed every 50th of a second (that's what it means when UK TVs are said to operate at 50Hz) and so a single frame of two fields takes up one 25th of a second.

With every other frame out of the picture, literally, you immediately reduce the amount of data by 50 per cent. Now you remove every other pixel, halving the resolution and reducing the data down to a quarter of the original. This entire process is called decimation.

Next the video data is converted to a YC signal – luminance (brightness) and chrominance (colour) – which is a much more compact method of carrying video data than the normal RGB signal.

The final and vastly more complex compression methods are termed Discrete Cosine Transformation Quantisation and Run Length Encoding. The basis for these is that not every frame of video is required: by storing certain frames, the

decoding chip can interpolate between them and generate the in between frames 'on the fly'.

Only certain key Intraframes are encoded in their entirety and these I frames then act as markers for the rest of the video. As such, I frames are usually the first frame in a sequence or in a scene change. The remaining frames are either the P (Predicted) frames or B (Bi-directional Interpolated) frames.

IN THE FRAME

P frames contain only the information about the changes in the movement and colour on screen. So, for instance, if you had a scene of a spaceship moving against a static backdrop, only the information regarding the direction and speed of the ship is stored as a motion vector. That way all the non-vital information can be discarded.

The final stage is to create the Bi-directional Interpolated (B) frames, which fill up the space between the I and P frames. B frames

are generated by comparing the differences between the I and P frames and storing any changes in positional data. This sounds like a complex and difficult process, and indeed it is – but it works!

Once the video compression is complete, one second of film footage takes up around 120K. The sound data takes up another 20K, leaving the remainder of the 150K as control data. The final step is to interleave the sound and video data, so that the CD drive reads a continual stream of video and sound.

The final result can vary depending on the quality of the original footage and, more

Good FMV, bad FMV – part 1: *Patriot Games*: Here you can see that a static close-up of Harrison (steady, girls) is crystal clear. But when the action starts, the fine detail, such as his face (inset), suffers badly.



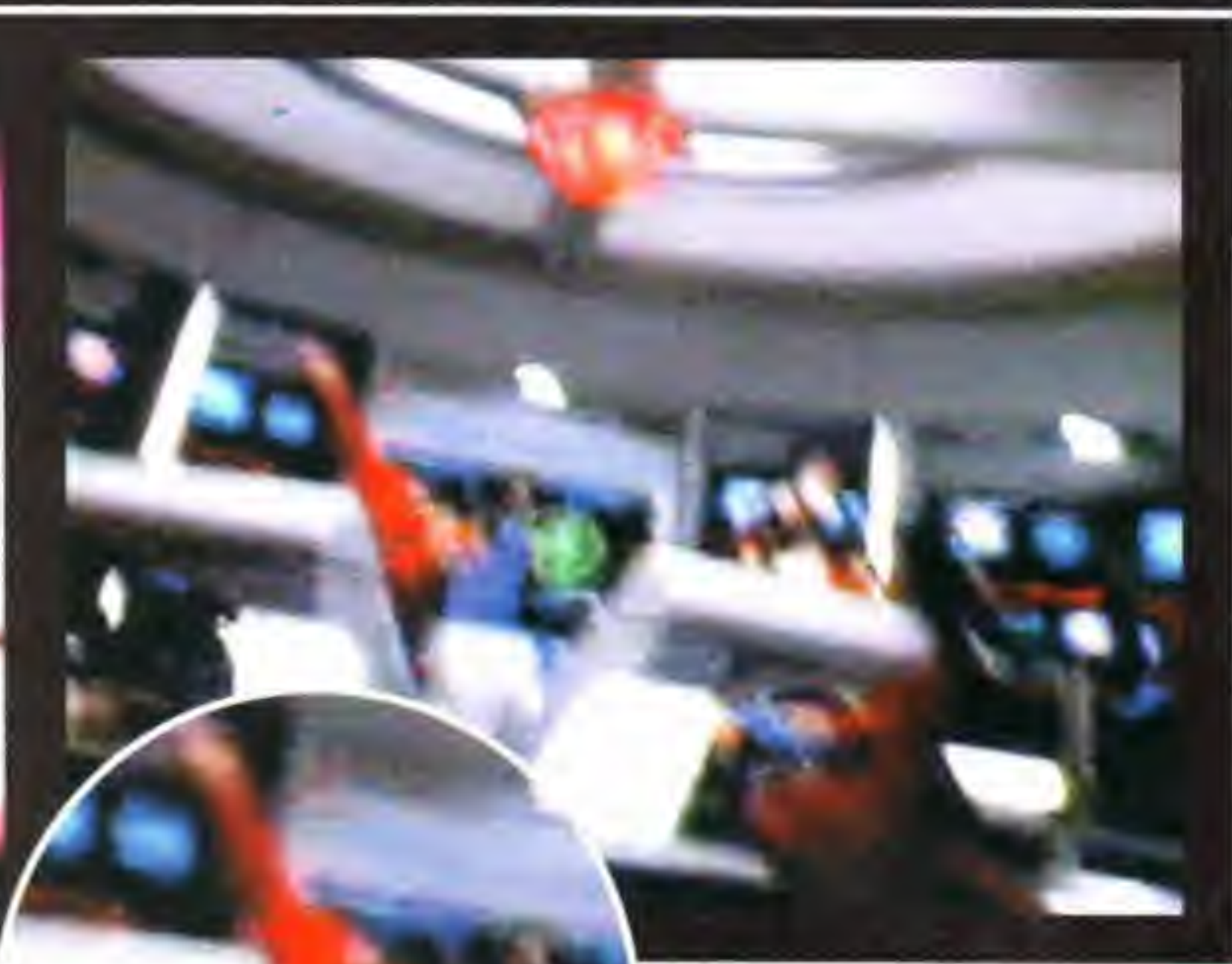
FMV cartridge owners will see this a lot: so far, the only movies available are from Paramount's back catalogue, thanks to a deal with Philips.



The CD32 menu screen. This automatically pops up when a film is loaded to show the contents of the disc – in this case one of Philips' movies.



At any time during the film, you can access a meter which shows the length of the movie, the elapsed time, the time remaining and so on.



importantly, the quality of the encoding. Film duplicators can simply set up the MPEG encoding hardware and let the machine do the rest; careful encoders will go through the film frame by frame to make sure that major scene changes are encoded as I frames, and that artifacts are kept to a minimum.

Artifacts are the strange blocks and 'heat haze' effects which can occur during particularly busy scenes. It's a fact that MPEG playback loves *Driving Miss Daisy*, but hates *Star Wars*: the busier the scene, the more difficult it is to encode it properly. The screen information is encoded in groups of pixels – reminiscent of character blocks – and occasionally the amount of data simply isn't sufficient to fully describe the finer details of the image, especially when it's interpolating between those frames which contain fast-moving or blurred images.

With regard to vertical resolution (the number of horizontal lines) and

picture clarity, MPEG video is higher quality than VHS videotape, but compared to the more expensive 12-inch analogue LaserDiscs, it still has some way to go in terms of quality.

The MPEG2 standard – which is designed to deliver 10 times the data of MPEG1 – solves any questions of picture quality, but is reliant upon doubling the data rates to 300K/sec. Fine, you might say, my CD32 can do that! But the downside is that you could only store 37 minutes of FMV instead of 74...

DIGITAL VIDEO: THE FUTURE

Obviously, the first use of MPEG-based FMV is in the storage and playback of movies, and much has been made of the potential. Several electronics manufacturers will soon be entering the Digital Video market with carousel players, which can

store and hold several Video CDs at the same time. But given that

VHS video recorders are installed in the majority of homes across the world, Digital Video has quite a task on its hands to usurp the familiar VCR from its position beneath the family TV. The key is real-time MPEG encoding – and the time when that will arrive isn't so very far away.

MPEG encoding currently takes between 20 and 200 times longer than playback: which in reality is between one and ten seconds. But real-time encoding systems are beginning to arrive. The first system, C-Cube's CL4000 costs around the £70,000 mark.

But, as with any technology, MPEG encoding is constantly being refined, updated and being made more efficient – and therefore becoming cheaper. Eventually mass-

Good FMV, bad FMV – part 2: *Star Trek VI*. One of the best MPEG movies so far, the bulk of *Star Trek VI* – especially the slow-moving ships (left) – contains some excellent detail. But once the action starts, so does the picture break-up (right and inset).



Virgin's *The 7th Guest* has been converted to run on Philip's CD-i machine in MPEG FMV – but this overblown puzzle game hardly justifies the effort.



Mad Dog McCree on CD-i benefits greatly from FMV sequences. But like *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*, it's hardly state of the art gameplay.



Sprawling adventure *Return To Zork* has been converted to run on the ReelMagic MPEG PC board. Slick graphics add nothing to the gameplay, though.

market real-time encoders will be available, accompanied either by cheap hard drives or re-writable CDs. And when the real-time encoders do arrive, VHS will quickly become a thing of the past.

For the immediate future, Digital Video has a much more important role to play in the arena of interactive TV: with sound and pictures squeezed into such a small bandwidth, the lanes of the information superhighway are already beckoning!

Fibre optic cables are already able to relay enormous amounts of data, and so all that is required for video-on-demand to become a reality is MPEG-standard players. The theory is simple: instead of watching what the broadcast stations decide you'll watch, you simply download whatever film

you want. The MPEG signal is pumped down the cable network and your player decodes it as you watch.

The other major use for Digital Video is in video games. Already there are games on the PC and CD-i that employ Digital Video sequences, with titles like *Return To Zork* and *Dragon's Lair* on the PC, plus *Mad Dog McCree* and *The 7th Guest* on CD-i paving the way.

EYE CANDY

So far no major developers have nailed their colours to the CD32 FMV mast, but David Pleasance, joint MD of Commodore UK, has stated that there are several FMV games currently in various stages of development for the CD32 and that they are looking fantastic.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

If nothing else, the advent of moving pictures on CD has brought with it its own confusing nomenclature. MPEG movies, Full Motion Video (FMV), Digital Video (DV) and Video CD are all one and the same thing: film footage compressed to the MPEG1 standard and stored on CD.

So far, though, all FMV or Digital Video, call it what you will, has offered us are 'eye candy' video sequences or rehashes of LaserDisc games such as *Mad Dog McCree* and *Dragon's Lair*. Just how the games developers will choose to use the undeniable potential and power of MPEG video remains to be seen...

MPEG

MPEG - The Motion Picture Experts Group - is the task force set up by the film industry and major electronics manufacturers to crack the almost insurmountable problem of storing FMV on CD.

The MPEG committee held its first meeting in Ottawa, Canada, back in May of 1988. A year later, at RCA's research centre in Princeton, New Jersey, they showed that it was possible to squeeze full-screen, full-colour motion pictures and sound into the 150K/sec bandwidth of a typical CD player. This was achieved, they explained, by comparing the content of certain frames in a sequence with other frames, and coding only the differences between the two. Digital Video was born.

But, thanks to lengthy corporate haggling (due mainly to Philips, the inventor and standard bearer of the Compact Disc), it wasn't until November 1992 that the MPEG1 standard was set. And then it took another two years for the first mass-market systems to become available: first as the DV cartridge for Philips CD-i players and then as the FMV cartridge for the CD32.

Since then, the committee has been working on MPEG2 - an improved compression method which can deliver a vast 15Mbps/sec - MPEG1 currently delivers up to around 3Mbps/sec from a 150K/sec data stream. MPEG2's higher quality pictures and sound are primarily designed for broadcast purposes, since it requires a data rate of 300K/sec, which then means the CD can only hold 37 minutes of FMV.

BLUE LASERS

Work is already underway on CD systems that have four times the density of normal CDs. But then these discs will have to spin four times faster and require special blue lasers which can focus on the smaller pits. Such laser optics are prohibitively expensive - at the moment. The work on MPEG3 was absorbed into the MPEG2 standard, but there is also an MPEG4 system which is based around low data rates for videophones and teleconferencing.

VIDEOS ON CD



So far, the list of movies on CD consists mainly of films from Paramount Studios' back catalogue, since they were the first to sign a deal with Philips early on in the history of Digital Video. Obviously, as more and more studios get in on the act, you can expect to see this list increase dramatically.

By far the best quality Digital Video film on release at the moment is *Star Trek VI*, which was encoded by Philips themselves from the direct master of the movie. Sound and pictures are crystal clear, with artifacts and blocking kept to a minimum.

MUSIC VIDEOS ON CD



Digital Video has captured the imagination of the music industry because of its link with CD. Music videos on CD are friendlier, since you can instantly skip to the track you want to listen to and watch; and since most music video footage isn't of the best quality, any blocking or picture break-up is more easily ignored. The current catalogue of titles isn't exactly awe-inspiring, but as with the line-up of movies, this is just the beginning...

A Fish Called Wanda
Black Rain
Coming To America
Fatal Attraction
Frauds
Ghost
Goldfinger
Indecent Proposal
The Krays
Naked Gun
Naked Gun 2 1/2
Patriot Games
Planes, Trains And Automobiles
Silver
Star Trek VI
The Crying Game
The Hunt For Red October
Top Gun
Wayne's World

Andrew Lloyd Webber - The
Premiere Collection
Antistatic
Bon Jovi - Keep The Faith
Bryan Adams - Waking Up The
Neighbours
David Bowie - The Video
Collection
Kate Bush - The Whole Story '94
Pink Floyd - Delicate Sound Of
Thunder
Queen - Greatest Flix I & II
Sting - Ten Summoner's Tales
The Cream Of Clapton
The Cure - Show
The Three Tenors
Tina Turner - Rio '88
Tina Turner - Simply The Best
The Worlds Of...

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!



MARVIN'S MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE COMPETITION

Not only have we got this brilliant game on our Coverdisc but now you have the chance to win one of 10 fabulous *Marvin* T-shirts kindly donated by 21st Century. Just answer the four questions below and send your answers on a postcard to:

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1. Name three of the demos on the first issue of *Amiga CD32's* Coverdisc.
2. Name one of the managing directors of Commodore UK.
3. Which software house does ex-editor of *Amiga Format* Marcus Dyson now work at?
4. On which dates does the Future Entertainment Show take place?

AT LAST!

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Paravision

You may be quite happy with your games console, but how would you like to have a *real* computer? Nick Veitch assesses your options...

The benefits of having a CD-ROM-based games console must be obvious to you. Games can have two-channel 16-bit audio, and feature almost unlimited amounts of graphics and animations. There's no doubt that CD-ROM-based software is the wave of the future.

But if you are just using CD technology to play games, you are only realising a small percentage of its potential. There is so much more you can do with CD-ROM applications.

Also, being a console that supports only CD-ROM, the CD32 is cut off from the great wealth of floppy disk-based software that has been the real impetus behind millions of Amiga sales across the globe.

While the Amiga market is still predominantly floppy-based (only 2% of *Amiga Format's* readers have a CD-ROM drive) it is more reasonable for

software companies to keep on pushing disks as opposed to discs.

The way out of this Catch-22 situation for the CD32 owner is to turn their machine into an Amiga.

At heart the CD32 is really just another Amiga. With CD-ROM support and the amazing Akiko chip, it is actually a sort of an Amiga+. But at the same time it lacks some of the things that home computer owners take for granted – such as space to put a hard drive, a floppy disk drive and a serial port.

This is where the Paravision SX-1 comes in. First impressions are not that good. This expansion module of the future looks like it was styled by the bozo that put together the CD32. It is, to say the least, inelegant. The case is rectangular and flat, apart from the odd screw or connector sticking out. Still, luckily for the editor, you shouldn't always judge something by its looks.

One side of the case is open, where the SX-1 connects to the CD³². There are actually two edge connectors here – one to connect up the SX-1 and a through-port for any current (ie FMV) CD³² expansions, or any future ones. This is definitely a good thing. Now you don't have to get MPEG on CD, you can source MPEG files yourself. There are plenty of MPEG shorts floating around on the Internet.

On the outside of the case, the most immediately important port is the floppy connector. This enables you to use a standard Amiga external floppy drive (which is recognised by the system as DF0:), which means that you can now boot from floppy. Not only does this enable you to load up Workbench, but you can also run standard Amiga disks (even games) just like an A1200.

The floppy drive is not included with the SX-1, so I advise you to buy one at the same time. You don't need anything fancy, and most drives cost around £40-£50. If you want a mouse, this can be plugged into the normal controller port.

The next essential item is a keyboard. The SX-1 has a connector for a PC-AT style keyboard. The logic behind this is that such keyboards are cheaper and easier to obtain. Unfortunately, they also lack the special Amiga keys. While you can still reset the CD³² with the reset button, you cannot use many of the hotkey shortcuts

pin D-type connector, instead of the usual Amiga 25-pin one. Of course, very few serial devices need the extra pins, but it does mean you'll have to go hunting for IBM serial cables instead of

Amiga ones. It also makes connecting up the SX-1 to another Amiga for serial data transfer slightly harder, as you'll probably have to make your own null-modem cable.

A useful addition is the RGB socket. This gives you a much clearer image when used with a standard Amiga monitor. The CD³² does have quite a few output sockets already, but the RF and composite ones don't give a very clear picture (neither does any other console using these outputs) and very few people can take advantage of the S-Video socket, because it is not a common feature on British TV sets. The RGB output gives you the clearest possible picture, providing you also get a monitor.

Of course, these days, no computer is really complete without a hard drive. There was no way of adding such a drive to the CD³² – until the SX-1 came along. The SX-1 is equipped with not one, but two hard drive interfaces. There are two sockets, one for an internal drive (a subminiature IDE connector) and one for an external IDE drive. The internal drive can be mounted inside the surface of the SX-1 itself, and draws its power from the

"If you have a CD³² and you would like to use it for more than just playing games, this is the only way to go"

SX-1

that every other Amiga user can. You can still use a standard A4000 keyboard in the side connector, but these are about £40 more expensive than an AT keyboard (£80! Can you believe it!). Having said that though, the quality of the Amiga keyboards have improved quite a bit – if you intend spending long hours typing, the Amiga keyboard certainly seems more responsive than a cheap AT one.

For those of you wishing to link up to a printer, or use ParNet to link up to another Amiga, or use a sound sampler, or any number of other things, there is a fully functioning Amiga standard parallel port situated at the rear. This is all you need to connect up to a whole range of peripherals, and something which the CD³² has sadly lacked.

There is also a serial port for modems (or other serial devices) but, bizarrely, this uses an IBM standard 9-

pin D-type connector, instead of the usual Amiga 25-pin one. Of course, very few serial devices need the extra pins, but it does mean you'll have to go hunting for IBM serial cables instead of

Amiga ones. It also makes connecting up the SX-1 to another Amiga for serial data transfer slightly harder, as you'll probably have to make your own null-modem cable.

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The RGB connector gives you the best picture, if used with an Amiga monitor.



The hard drive connector can be used to add an external IDE mechanism. These are a lot cheaper than SCSI mechanisms.



The insides of the SX-1 are very densely packed: there is a lot to fit in. As well as all the ports, there's a keyboard translator, the clock, the ROMs, a SIMM connector and the hard drive interface.

PARAVISION SX-1

DISTRIBUTOR : **CALCULUS (0543) 418666**

PRICE : **£199.95**

**PLUS £49.95 (KEYBOARD),
£48.99 (DISK DRIVE)**

RATING : **88%**

ALIEN BREED 2x

Alien Breed is one of the most popular games ever to appear on the Amiga and Team 17 are bringing it bang up-to-date for the CD32 in *Alien Breed 2: Tower Assault*. Steve Bradley gets a sneak preview.

The words alien and breed are synonymous with Amiga game players. For one or two players, *Alien Breed* is a viewed-from-above blast-em-up, loosely based on the *Alien* films in which you circle the corridors of an alien-infested spaceship, spraying bullets at the baddies while collecting extra firepower and keys to open doors to further explore the ship.

The original *Alien Breed* appeared in November 1991 and despite a couple of design faults, was generally felt to be a sound platform upon which to build. Not being the sorts to rest upon their laurels, the Wakefield softies brought out a *Special Edition* which ironed out the flaws and added extra levels – all for under £11.

By now, the game was building up a solid following and the second incarnation proper appeared last Christmas; *Alien Breed 2: The Horror Continues* looked (and, in the most part, played) beautifully, although



Team 17 are confident that the *LightWave* technology, together with their Raptor Plus machine will blow other softies' visuals out of the water.



Tower Assault continues the traditional format of the *Alien Breed* series, yet adds a host of new features.



Tower Assault features the most spectacular intro sequences since *Microcosm*.

TOWER ASSAULT



For one or two players, *Tower Assault* daringly depicts dead bodies lying around, but gets an ELSPA rating of 15 for its troubles.

"*Tower Assault* has 50 levels, a whole host of baddies and some devilish guardians"

John Allardice is the chap who produces *Tower Assault*'s intros, outros and cut-out sequences – they're quite spectacular.



Microcosm featured an amazing, cinematic-style intro sequence but lacked the essential gameplay factor. Hopefully, *Tower Assault* will play as well as the dramatic intro views.

unfortunately the first level was ridiculously hard. But it continued the success of the *Breed* genre.

You may be asking what has all this got to do with me? I own a CD32, I have never heard of *Alien Breed*. Fair enough, but Team 17 are set to release the all-new CD32 version of *Alien Breed 2: Tower Assault*, packaged together with the original *Alien Breed 2* (the one where the horror continued), so it's worth knowing the pedigree of the game. Even though *Tower Assault* is a new game, Team 17 won't drop the *Breed* name because it's so well known, so *Alien Breed 2: Tower Assault* it is.

Team 17's Alan Bunker explains: "Many enhancements have been made over the other *Breed* games – we've strived to make *Tower Assault* significantly different in terms of gameplay while maintaining the fundamental *Breed* features which made the games so popular.

"*Tower Assault* features dark levels where only flickering green consoles and the blue eyes of the on-coming aliens can be seen. The players will have torches which light up a small area ahead – you'll have to search out pass cards and ammo. Mission-related stages will also be incorporated so, for example, you may have to rescue hostages and then guide them to safety, protecting them as they follow you to the exit."

Indeed, there are 50 new levels in *Tower Assault*, a heap more baddies and some devilish end-of-level guardians. In some of the levels, there will be a liberal scattering of dead bodies, victims of the aliens – which means that the game will be given an ELSPA rating of 15.

Tower Assault also features improvements in the two-player mode. Alan elucidates. "There's now a

retreat facility where a player can walk backwards while firing away from him at the same time. This is really effective in two-player mode where player one can storm forwards, gun blazing, while player two can follow and keep shooting in the opposite direction, so you can protect each other's backs.

"Combine this with the fact that players can now shoot at each other and what you have is a much more co-operative two-player mode where players are strongly encouraged to work together and optimise firepower."

The CD32 version also features some incredible-looking *LightWave 3D* intros, outros and cut-out sequences produced by John Allardice on a posh Raptor Plus machine – the only one of its kind in Europe, apparently. And if you're in any doubt as to the quality, take a look at the cover of this mag. CDs have 650 Mb of memory and it's nice to see a deal of it being used. £30 for both *Alien Breed 2* and *Tower Assault* is excellent value for money but, of course, we shall have to wait and see how *Tower Assault* plays. *Tower Assault* is available in October.

ALIEN BREED 2: TOWER ASSAULT

PRICE: £29.99

PROGRAMMERS: Stefan Boberg and Tony Turenen

PUBLISHERS: Team 17
(0924) 201846



THE LOST EDEN:

The answer to all those pleas for 'proper' CD games is about to appear, courtesy of Virgin Games. Steve Jarratt (who's something of a gaming dinosaur himself) takes a closer look...



The *Lost Eden* boasts more dino footage than that movie... Oh, what was it called?



Travel back through time, to an age when MacDonalds' burgers were 50ft wide.

Imagine an alternative Eden in which man evolves alongside the dinosaurs. Homo sapiens has formed an alliance with the lumbering herbivores – brontosaurus, triceratops, stegosaurus and so on – in a fight against their common enemy, the carnivorous tyrannosaurus rex.

Huge citadels have been built to keep the carnivores at bay but, in the wake of power struggles and a vicious war against the T-Rexes, the alliance has been broken, the giant buildings now lie in ruin – and the secret of their construction has been lost.

Into this story enters one Adam – son of Priam The Conqueror, grandson of the treacherous leader

whose actions led to the downfall of the alliance, and great-grandson of the man who was the original architect of the giant citadels. Playing the role of Adam, you must venture forth across the four continents of Eden, searching for the secret of the citadels so that they can be built once more.

Of course, one puny human being cannot construct a citadel all on his own, so at the same time you must re-form allegiances with the herbivores in order to get them to assist you in your task.

Your actions in the land of Eden are displayed as a series of succulent movie clips. Each time you make a journey, solve a puzzle, or persuade a

INTRODUCING THE INHABITANTS OF EDEN...



This pterodactyl is called Eloi. He's your guide for the forthcoming quest.



This big ape is obviously a guard. Of some description...



Um... A native. With a mask on. And lots of hair. With a big pointy spear.



Oh dear. Erm, well this is a sort of monkey. Looks a bit like Dickie Davis.

dinosaur to carry building materials, one of the many elegant rendered sequences are played, bringing the dinosaurs of Eden magically to life.

In fact, Cryo has had a 10-man team of artists rendering and animating dinosaurs for the best part of a year! There are about 50 sequences, lasting between five and 20 seconds each; running at 24 frames per second and there are over 18,000 frames stored on the CD.

The game features a point 'n' click interface, where your options are presented on screen by various icons. However, a pterodactyl called Eloi acts as the narrator of the story, explaining events as they take place and serves as your transport across the primordial landscape.

The Lost Eden has been coded by French software house, Cryo, who were also responsible for *Mega Race* (see page 24). And even though comparisons with *Jurassic Park* will no doubt be made, the game was in production long before the Spielberg blockbuster started busting blocks.

"The project was actually started well before the film came out," states Cryo director Jean-Martial LeFranc, "although we'd heard that it was coming and guessed that dinosaurs were going to be 'in'. Personally, I see no reason why they shouldn't be a popular theme, as long as the scenario is original."

And original, *The Lost Eden* certainly is. "You first have to discover what your destiny is," explains LeFranc, "then you must find out how to make the good dinosaurs ally with you. Then you go and fight against the bad dinosaurs."

"It's an adventure game in a rendered environment, but you are able to move around this environment, meet characters and interact with them. The big cinematic scenes are included as part of the scenario."

There's no doubt that *The Lost Eden* looks completely gorgeous, but how will it play? Well, we'll have to wait until the CD32 version is released in January.

BRONTOSAURUS – JURASSIC JCB



The only way you can rebuild the huge citadels of Eden is to enlist the aid of the friendly brontosaurus.



Only these vast herbivores are big enough to fetch and carry the building materials needed.



And besides, they work for peanuts. Several tons, admittedly, but peanuts nonetheless.



Sorry, not a clue. One of the cantina creatures from *Star Wars* perhaps?

MEGA RACE

Richard Jones previews the new batch of CD32 games about to be released for your fab console.



The lengthy game intro sets the scene with brilliantly-rendered cityscapes.



The white thing that looks like a puddle is in fact a speed-up. Drive over it and hang on for dear life.

Two *Mega Race* cars spin and swoop into view in the intro sequence.



If you've been wondering when you're finally going to see the first in the new generation of CD32 games that really take advantage of the machine's fantastic graphics capabilities, the answer is very soon, because *Mega Race* should be in the shops any time now.

Mega Race is a futuristic and frenzied street racing game that looks fantastic and plays superbly. The action combines white-knuckle racing action with elements of fantasy and virtual reality – there's much more to this game than just selecting automatic gears and keeping the gas pedal glued to the floor.

But to begin at the beginning... *Mega Race* is a conversion of the PC

CD-ROM game that stormed straight into the Gallup CD chart at Number One, it was developed by Software Toolworks, it's distributed by Mindscape and was coded by the French Cyro team.

The game is set in an interactive TV show, hosted by the zany Lance Boyle, in which the audience compete in the virtual reality *Mega Race*. After a brilliant intro sequence in which you sweep across a fantastically-rendered cityscape and cut back to real footage of the bubbly Lance Boyle, it's in to the game proper.

First you custom build your own beautifully-rendered street racer and then do battle with your virtual reality opponents over a series of breath-

YOU'LL LIKE LANCE, A LOT



Here we are at the *Mega Race* studios, ready for another episode of the virtual reality racing game.



And here's your host for tonight's show – Lance Boyle. Let's run through those game rules Lance.



What a zany fella you are Lance, play your cards right and you could end up hosting *Play Your Cards Right*.

Turn left at the lights, take the flyover, and the Virtual Reality Arms is the third turning on the right.



Night falls over the neon-festooned city and it's a race against time to make it to Tesco before it closes.

taking main courses and several hidden ones.

It's in the course construction that *Mega Race* comes across as being a game that has been specifically written to take full advantage of the CD32's amazing graphics and massive memory. The roads and scenery are effectively video footage played back from disc, rather than the more conventional mathematically calculated tracks that are played back a frame at a time. The result is a stunning and incredibly fast racing game, set against detailed and fantastically-designed backdrops.

"The big technical trick in *Mega Race* is to have the sprite follow the rendered track as you play, and getting the car to go away from you or grow closer as you race," explains Jean-Marial Lefranc, one of Cyro's founder members.

All sorts of technical wizardry has been employed to make the rendered track and scenery and the sprite-based cars interact with one another and to keep the pace of the race slick and fast while all the number crunching is going on.

The result is a game that really does justice to the CD32, rather than a port of an A1200 game with a few fancy graphics and a tweaked soundtrack. *Mega Race* was good on the PC, on CD32 it looks even better.



This hill looks a tad (gulp!) steep, best engage a low gear.



They say the road goes on for ever, which is patently untrue.

MEGA RACE

PRICE: £34.99

PROGRAMMER: Cyro

DISTRIBUTORS: Mindscape
(0444) 246333

COMING SOON

SPACE ACADEMY

DISTRIBUTOR: Mindscape
(0444) 246333
PRICE: £25.99
RELEASE: November

There are 700 rooms to explore in *Space Academy*, so make sure you take a packed lunch.



Space is big. Albert Einstein and Neil Armstrong have proved that by thinking about it a lot (in Albert's case) and going there to take a peek (in Neil's). So it should come as no surprise that *Space Academy* is a huge adventure/strategy game with 700 rooms taking up oodles of megabytes of rendered graphics. The gameplay is a combination of strategy, puzzles and adventure in which you have to avoid SAS with pseudo artificial intelligence and interact with the various other characters.

On your way you must maintain your nutritional levels by getting snacks from vending machines, and taking the occasional swig from a water dispenser. The hazards and puzzles you'll encounter on your way include mazes, rotten floors, bomb rooms, an insect room, electrified floors, rooms that fill with water and much, much more.

EVASIVE ACTION

DISTRIBUTOR: Mindscape
(0444) 246333
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE: November

The all-action flight sim *Evasive Action* promises to be a real high-flyer.



It's peculiar that the word dogfight is used to describe a couple of aeroplanes knocking the stuffing out of one another. You'd think it was a more appropriate way to describe a couple of curs mauling in the street.

Anyway, if it's dogfights you want, you need a flight sim – there being a marked lack of canine beat-em-ups on the CD32 – and one of the most exciting new arrivals promises to be *Evasive Action*. Touted as being an air combat simulator rather than just a flight sim, *Evasive Action* sets you up against an opponent in four different airborne scenarios. Heavy on the coin-op influences, but with movie sequences of air combat manoeuvres and a full CD soundtrack it could be the dog's bol! (Snip – Ed.)

BALDY

DISTRIBUTOR: Mindscape
(0444) 246333
PRICE: To be announced
RELEASE: Early 1995

Exactly why the characters in this ambitious god game from

the Creative Edge team are bald, is not entirely clear. But there's not a comb or a barber's shop to be found in the huge world of the baldies. The game is set over more than 100 themed worlds and you must guide your tribe of baldies through these worlds, inventing things defending the shiny-headed ones against the six rival tribes of chrome domes.

To increase the population of baldies, you have to build houses so they can start breeding and once you've established your society you can use the baldies' specific attributes (worker, breeder, scientist, soldier and so on) to effect the direction in which the game progresses. The simulated world of the baldies is a complex affair, and Creative Edge promise that it's going to be one of the most challenging simulations on the CD32. Expect the bald ones on a screen near you early next year.

The baldies busily set about building their society happily singing: Hair we go, hair we go, hair we go...



MARVIN'S MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE

21ST CENTURY ENTERTAINMENT
(0235) 851852

Young Marvin wants, somewhat predictably, a pizza the action – but will 21st Century's platform game deliver? Steve Bradley says: 'hold the anchovies' and takes a nibble...

Every console has its own little platform pal, a chum by which proud owners can identify with their machine, a comrade, a confidant, a crony, if you will. The Mega Drive has His Blueness, the pacy, racy Sonic The Hedgehog while a small, Italian/American plumber known as Mario carries the SNES flag with veritable aplomb.

Not so the CD32. Sure, that young-feller-me-ninja Zool, who, go on, admit it, does look a teensy weensy bit like an ant, has been knocking around for a while but he's more likely to be identified with the floppy disk Amiga machine. And fishular secret agent James Pond has been around for longer than most donkeys, so he doesn't really count.

Perhaps this is about to change. 21st Century Entertainment have realised that no such pal exists and have come up with Marvin, a pizza delivery boy who is set to embark, quite possibly, on a marvellous adventure. And hey, if you can have a



moustachioed plumber, who's to say a flaxen-haired, bread-based-with-a-variety-of-toppings conveyer can't go out into the world and make a contribution to world peace. Or even world pizza.

So what has he to do? A professor has been kidnapped (perhaps even the very same professor who invented pizza in Barnsley way back in 1937) and while it's likely that extrication is uppermost in the mind of the culinary brainy one, it seems that Marvin's job is to deliver a large pepperoni with extra cheese to revive our prof's flagging spirit and, no doubt, groaning breadbasket.

Standing quite forcibly in Marvin's way are 90 levels of platform action split into 10 different worlds – and that, indeed, is rather a lot. Surely the pizza will have gone cold by the time he reaches the prof? Pointless conjecture aside, *Marvin's Marvellous Adventure* is going to be, in terms of gaming area, one of the largest games to appear on the CD32 – you're unlikely to finish this



Get a slice of the action with this pizza-based platform romp. It's looooooong

in a day. In fact, it won't be appearing on floppy-based Amigas because it would require a ton of disks.

Six layers of scrolling, 256 colours, a plethora of music tracks and some furious platform antics should be a recipe for success – but will it deliver? Marvin can utilise jetpacks to shoot to those inaccessible areas and there are more picks-ups to collect than you've had hot pizzas, but there have been massive platformers before which haven't captured that essential 'feel' which separate the wheat from the chaff. Of course, if you fancy a quick

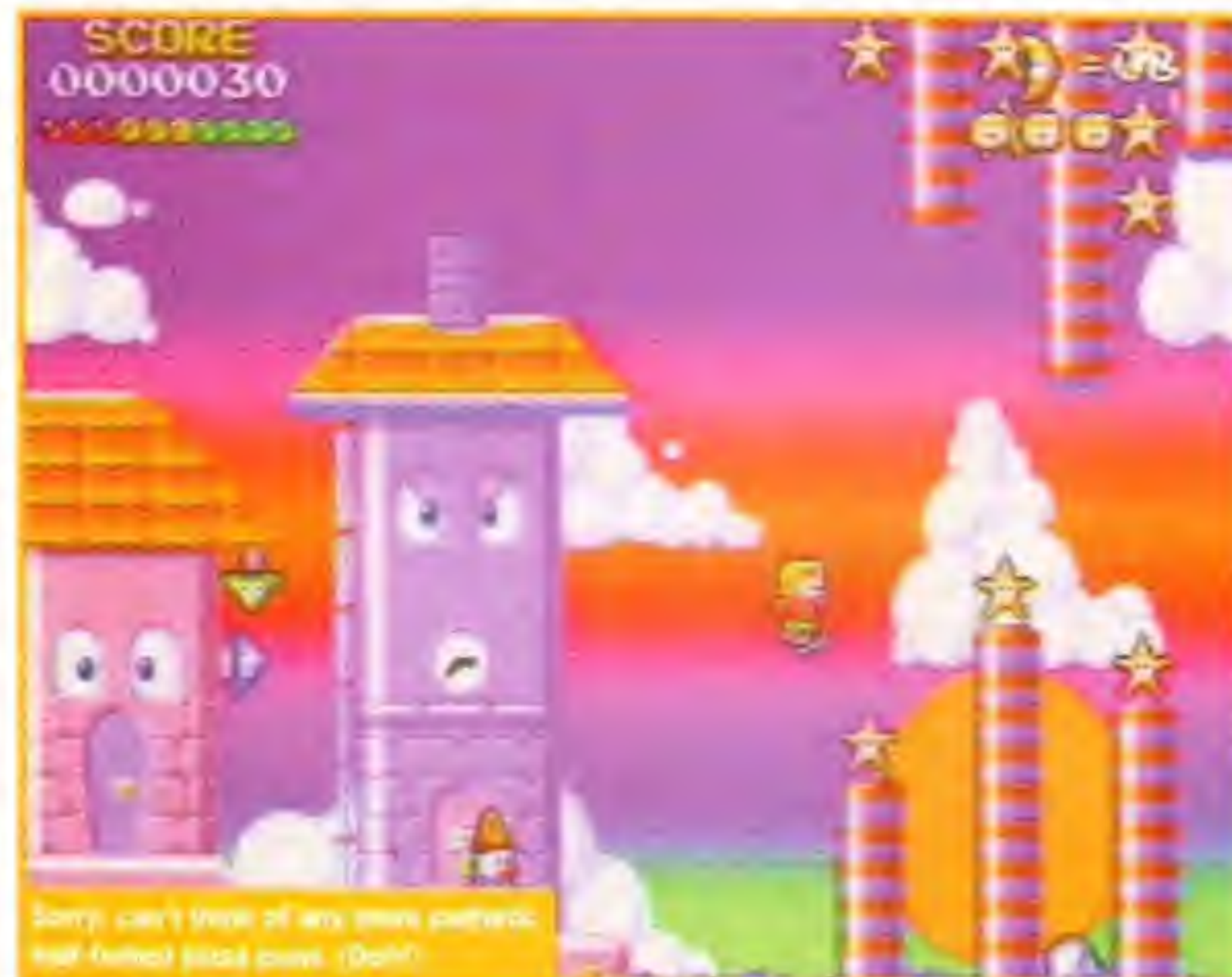


Marvin's Marvellous Adventure may have pretty graphics, but will the gameplay be worthy of the name?

bite, bung in our Coverdisc and see if you like the taste. *Marvin's Marvellous Adventure* hits the shelves in October.



Marvin has to journey across 90 levels and 10 worlds – that's a long time



Sorry, can't think of any more platformer half-baked pizza puns. (Doh!)



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SUPER STARDUST

Team 17 are taking the concept of *Asteroids* and shooting it into the Nineties with *Super Stardust*. Steve Bradley has an early blast.

Everyone, at some point in their lives has played *Asteroids*. Apart from my Grandma. The turn of the Eighties saw an explosion in the

popularity of video games and kids everywhere huddled around coin-ops in arcades and sports centres. *Asteroids* was one of the most popular,

probably because the concept was blindingly simple – you controlled a minuscule ship and blasted merrily at on-coming boulders which splintered on impact. Technology has moved on from then of course, yet the basic concept of gameplay remains the same. Many games that appear this year won't be (and, indeed, aren't) as good as *Asteroids* circa 1980 because they simply aren't as playable.

Super Stardust adheres to the concept of the original *Asteroids* but brings it into 1994 with a bang. There are 30 levels of some of the most spectacularly-rendered

baddies yet seen and four gorgeous-looking tunnel sequences to shoot through. We've taken a close look at the AGA floppy version (all right, we played it solidly for a week) and the explosions and ray-traced guardians are visually stunning.

Coders Bloodhouse are also putting together some 3D intro sequences for the CD32 which should be well worth a view. Look out for the finished game in October.



It may play like *Asteroids*, but *Super Stardust* looks just a bit better.



This is the Big Bang theory in action. You get shot and there's a big bang.



The rendered tunnel sequences at the end of every six missions are visually stunning – and very difficult.

MANCHESTER UNITED PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

KRISALIS (0709) 372290

Steve Bradley takes his seat in the stand to take a peek at the Old Trafford footie contender.

If you're going to make a football game and name it after one club then you might as well plump for the most popular. Whatever your feelings for the Red Devils, they are undeniably Britain's biggest footie team.

Manchester United Premier League Champions contains all the league and conference teams, all the player data is realistic and the game combines elements of arcade action and management.

The pitch view is the now traditional top-down perspective and you can guide any team you wish

through the rigours of a full season. Visually, it resembles *Sensible Soccer* though it's a yard and a half quicker. Also included is a TactiGrid which enables you to position your players anywhere on the pitch and tailor your formation to perfection. The major addition from the original floppy version is that of pictures of the relevant Premiership grounds before the fixtures and if you play for Man Utd, you are treated to action shot photographs too. The attention to data detail is exacting and because the teams' abilities reflect real life (sort of) you can warm up by taking on non-league sides. *Manchester United Premier League Champions* will be on the shelves in October.



The Leeds United team select their Away strip...

...and then it's on with the game. Here are Leeds attacking. Of course this couldn't happen in real life.

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Bubba 'n' Stix

The puzzle game that looks like a cartoon and plays like a dream. It earned a rating of 90% in the first issue of this very magazine. To help Bubba escape from an alien world you use his incredibly useful friend, Stix.



Chuck Rock II

This game scored 79% in our sister magazine, *Amiga Format*. It contains six levels of prehistoric combative platform action as Chuck Jr battles dinosaurs, snakes, elephants, tigers and turtles in his quest to rescue his kidnapped father, Chuck Rock.

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CANNON FODDER

World-famous author Cam Winstanley explains how you can buy his *Cannon Fodder*

You know, hardly a day goes by without some passer-by, an elderly cleric or a trainee butcher for instance, stopping me in the street and saying excitedly: 'You're Cameron Winstanley, aren't you?' I usually bow my eyes in mock submission, blush a little and say: 'Well, yes actually, I am,' at which point they tend to get flustered, rummage around for a pen and paper to get my autograph and shower me with elaborate (and, in my opinion completely justified) praise about my book, *The Official Cannon Fodder Playing Guide* (Available from all good book shops for just £9.95, bargain hunters).

Being a best selling author isn't an easy life, what with the wild parties and endless circuit of talk shows and supermarket openings, and I constantly find myself answering the same questions over and over again. To save both time and breath, here are the most-asked queries answered in my own inimitable and just a teensy weensy, ever so slightly verbose way. I thank you.

1 I move my men into an area and am looking around, working out what to do next, when... WHAMMO!! there's a huge explosion and my boys are scattered all over the place like particularly leaky and organic skittles. What am I doing wrong?

You're breaking the number one rule of *Cannon Fodder*, which is to KEEP MOVING. The thing you've got to realise is that *Cannon Fodder* baddies are like those mad dogs that chase cars down streets, and aim at where you are rather than aiming at where you will be by the time the bullets (or teeth, in the case of the pooch) get to

you. Now if you're standing still, this is a problem, because where you are and where you will be are the same place, where as if you KEEP MOVING, then they'll consistently shoot behind you. Another problem with standing still is that enemies armed with rocket launchers can fire at you from off the screen, so if you're dithering around, you probably won't even notice a tiny and fast moving projectile heading towards your guys.

The little fellas have tremendous stamina – they never run out of breath, get stitches or complain that they're hot, so keep your guys moving. You know it makes sense.



1. How to cross a river under fire. First find your river. Obvious, I suppose.



2. Split the team and send one squad over, keeping control of the ones on land.



1. If your troops were moving then this soldier would be aiming behind you.



3. Disaster! A rocket's just whooshed in and taken out your unit. But where from?



3. Once they land, send the next lot over but switch control to the ones on land.



2. However, you're not, he isn't and another bloke's dead. KEEP MOVING!!



4. See? They can shoot you from even off the screen, so ALWAYS KEEP MOVING!!



4. And they're across. This way you'll always be able to fire on the enemy.

2 I attack an enemy base and come up against overwhelming odds. I start to pull back, blasting the closest baddies and then, horror of horrors, come upon a river. I send the team across by clicking on the far side, but it's no good, they all get shot up while doggy paddling across. Surely there's a way to cope with this situation without this massive loss of life?

OK, hold it right there pal, you're going at it all wrong from the very beginning. You're retreating from an enemy base, is that what you're telling me?

Well, excuse me, but I thought that *Cannon Fodder* was all about attacking and blowing things up. If you want to run away from the action and swim across the nearest river, why not just quit right now and play a cute platform game or something?

Attack, attack, attack!!! This is what you should be doing. The only way to halt a constant stream of enemies is to destroy the hut they're coming out of, which means closing in on the base and throwing something explosive at it. If a frontal attack seems completely suicidal, try and sneak round the side of the base and throw a grenade over some trees, but always remember that buildings are your main targets.

As far as crossing rivers under fire, well it's not something I'd advise, but if you insist on giving it a go, your best bet is to split your team.



Your men don't stick out from the treeline, so this chopper can't see them. Hurrah!

3 Every time a helicopter flies overhead, it locks on to my valiant team and drops things on them, causing intense grief and hurtage. This doesn't strike me as fair, or even fun for that matter.

No one ever said that life's fair, but I'll agree that helicopters are very, very, very bad things indeed, and completely invulnerable to ground fire when they're in the air. You can take them out mid-flight by crashing

DDER

book in five easy-to-follow stages.

another helicopter into them, but because your pilot dies too and you can only do this in the later missions, it's not really a helpful hint.

You can't shoot choppers, you can't run from them, but you can hide from them, and although it's not very glamorous, cowering behind a bush while blubbing is a better alternative than getting bombed.

The question to ask yourself when hiding is: 'Does my team look bumpy?' Four soldiers standing along the edge of a treeline will usually be safely hidden, as will a team clumped together in an indentation. However, one soldier next to a tree and one guy in front of him is bad news. The helicopter will see him, the bombs will start raining down and in next to no time your blokes will have died for whatever cause they were fighting for.

4 Sob! Mission Eight phase two is as far as I can get. How am I supposed to destroy the enemy huts when they're made of reinforced concrete? Please, you've got to help me, I've been trying to do it for 77 hours straight.

And help you I shall, oh woefully poor *Cannon Fodder* player. Mission Eight phase two is a truly difficult level, and even if you know how to do it, it's still no guarantee of success. Here's how I attempt it.

Shoot the first sniper on top of the bunker (1) then hide behind the ruined huts. Split the team down and send one guy off round the bunker. On the first pass, grenade the sniper (2) and then switch to rockets before running by again and zapping the other rocket launcher (3). Once these are dead, send the other three guys over to the far side of the water (4).

Switch back to the single guy and walk him up to the palm tree and barrel (5), where two snipers will shoot at him, hit nearby clutter and perish in their self-made explosion (6). By moving fast you can shoot the remaining two snipers on the island, which leaves him nothing to do. Pull him back to the top of the screen and switch to the other group.

Run to the nearest bunker, shoot the sniper, then head round the front of it and throw a grenade at the next sniper (7). This leaves just one rocket-firing sniper to shoot (8) before you cross over onto the island.

Make sure you gun down everyone nearby before crossing the water, cross at the narrowest point

and once you get to the island, shoot everyone on it. You've got to make sure the island is completely free of all baddies before you get into the turret (9) or they'll make life extremely short for you.

Fire at all the bunker doors as fast as you can and if you hit them squarely, you'll see them fly off, signalling that bunker as officially destroyed. It's easy to catch your own turret in an explosion if you aim too close to yourself, so to be extra safe, jump out and shoot anyone who makes it to the island. Eventually, everything will be rubble and everyone will be dead, so three cheers for gas-operated fully-automatic weaponry!

5 I find it terribly distressing to see my soldiers horribly killed by booby traps. What can I do about it?

Very little I'm afraid, my over-sensitive pal, apart from maybe spotting them before you trip over them, or not watching as your guys perish. To help, check on the right for a not-particularly-helpful guide to booby traps.

Thankfully, the tripwires and mines can be exploded by shooting at them, whereas all you can do when you are confronted by a sharpened stick is to stay away from them, or at least shoot your man when he's impaled on one. It's a tricky decision I know, but one that you'll almost certainly have to make.

Well, doesn't time fly when you're being all knowledgeable and tremendously helpful? I've got to be at a dreadfully important cocktail party in an hour or so, so I'll just remind you (again) that my book (*The Official Cannon Fodder Guide*, published by *Future Publishing* for a mere £9.95 - Ed) covers all the missions in the game, and is a jolly entertaining read. Cheery bye then!



TREAD LIGHTLY



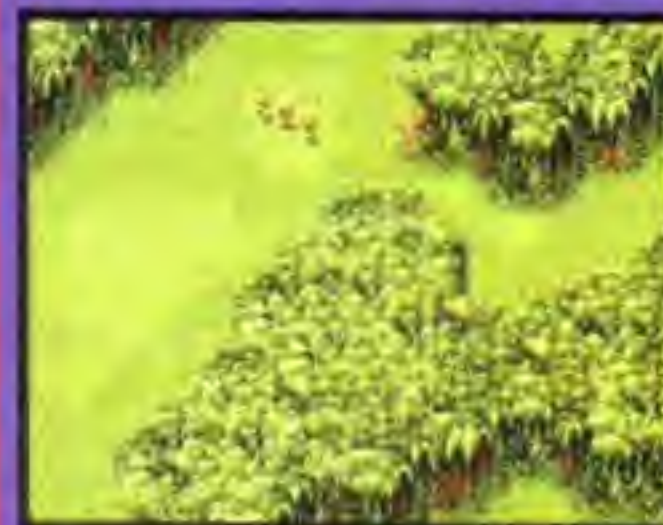
Tripwires are easy-peasy to spot...



...and simple to detonate. Just fire.



Spikes are mean 'cos they're invisible.



Until they spring out and spike you...



...forcing to to shoot your man. Nasty.



See those tiny blobs? Avoid them.



I said avoid them. They're mines.

HEIMDALL 2



Shoot the pillar with the ring of fire to transport yourself to the Half-World.



Utgard. Land of fire giants, ice giants and green monsters who are very hard to kill.



Yet another letter to collect means this should have been called Heimdall The Postman.

From the mists of Nordic myth comes Ursha the warrior and Heimdall too.

H eimdall 2 is one of the most beautiful 3D isometric puzzley adventure games currently residing in the Most Beautiful Graphics Of All Time library of CD32 titles. Just in case you're stuck and you can't bear to miss out on all the high-quality graphics awaiting your admiration, take heed. We're going to walk you through so that you'll end up with three Ro'Gelds in your possession.

One word of warning before we get stuck in though, certain creatures that are very powerful have to be faced and killed. To make this easier, learn how to cast spells properly and pick up as many runestones as possible. So, with a Hi-Ho and a Hi-De-Hi, let's get on with it.

You start off in the Hall Of The Worlds. Go through the only portal that it's possible to exit from. You are now in the world of Midgard.

First off, you have to visit Rurik. To gain access, shoot the pillar on the left of the screen with an arrow. A magical bridge appears. Walk across it. Ignore the guy in the next screen. Jump down on to the little plot of sand and make your way through the corridor. Walk into the first building. Open the box at the back of the room and take the circlet inside.

Amble along for a while and speak to Rurik. Head for the world map screen. Sail along to Eadric's village. Make peace with him by giving him the circlet. Traipse along to the pub and process the information that you'll find there.

Head back to Rurik's village and give him the letter from Eadric. Eadric should give you a pass for the King's

castle. Guess where you're going to wander off to next?

Give the guard at the King's Castle the pass and then aim for the kitchen. The servant girl there tells you what to do next. Head for the room with the large picture whose eyes follow you. Press Fire to reveal a secret door. Walk into the bedroom and press the button on the bedpost. A small, secret panel now opens. Take out the signet ring inside it.

Go to the guard just outside the kitchen and give him the ring. Kill the Hakrat inside here. Save the game before you go down the stairs. Use offensive spells and loads of arrows.

The King's brother will give you a letter. Give the letter to the King. The King's advisor disappears along with the forcefield at the top of the stairs. Run up the stairs into the next room. Shoot an arrow into each of the three holes. The missing floor appears. Walk across it into the next room and collect the first piece of Ro'Geld – a skull.

Leave the village and set sail to the Fisherman's Hut. Enter his home and press Fire in front of the cupboard. The fisherman tells you a tale of intrigue which means that you should now head for Loki's shrine. Save the fisherman's daughter. She gives you a talisman to open the portal to the next world. Make your way back to the Hall Of The Worlds.

The next world is known as Utgard. Speak to the dying man on the battlefield. Go back to the previous screen and shoot an arrow into the circle of flame. Walk back to the dying man. He speaks again and then leaves you his armour. Put it on. You



The Rainbow Ring you obtained earlier should be thrown in here.



Bring the talisman you collected in Utgard here later on to be transported to the Fire Sprite's World.

can now enter the castle. Give the King the letter from the dying man. Take the letter from the King. Explore the castle until you come across a table with a rainbow ring on it. Take the ring.

Leave the castle and set sail to the Giant's isle. Go into the Ice God's room and fill your flask with water. Go into the Fire God's room and pour the water on to the fire. Make your way back into the Ice God's room and walk over the bridge. Keep following the path. Throw the rainbow ring into the sphere of light.

Head back to the map screen and sail to the Giant's HQ. Follow the logical path and push over the candle. A talisman will appear from underneath the book. Take it and go back to the Hall Of The Worlds.

As soon as you enter the next portal, everything turns black. You awaken in a cell. Push the bread in the cell out to the rat. He opens the cell door for you. Walk along the sewer and give the letter to the Dwarven King. He gives you another letter in exchange for your letter. Walk down the steps and take the second piece of Ro'Geld from the skeleton. Head back to the Hall Of The Worlds.

Go back to Utgard 1 and give the King the letter. In return, he gives you a talisman for Her'Keryn.

Speak to the druid and go into the map screen. Sail to the Dakta Village. Head for the armourers and kill the Dakta you find there. Take the sword. Combat will now be slightly easier. Go to the pub and kill the Dakta in there. Amble along to the room on the lower

side of the wharf and kill both Daktas. Walk back to the map screen and sail to the Dakta HQ.

Jump down past the spiky ball and run along into the alcove. Press the switch on the wall. Go into the room with the pile of gold and press Fire in front of the map. Bludgeon your mirror reflection to death and do likewise to the Dakta. Take the talisman.

Sail to ??? Island. Make your way across the tiles in the following manner; furthest left tile: up four, down one, right one, up two, left one and up the rest. Shoot the arrows into each of the mouths. The third piece of Ro'Geld should now be available to you. And now, it's time to head off back to the Hall Of The Worlds.

Congratulations, you have now collected three Ro'Gelds. You are now more than half-way through the adventure and need to find one more Ro'Geld to be able to face Loki at the end of the game. Before you phone in we know there are really five Ro'Gelds, but officially there are only four.



Pushing the candle over reveals a pleasant surprise. Make best use of it.



The final stage in Midgard has been completed. And the fisherman's daughter gives you a travel talisman as a reward.

STRAIGHT FROM THE NORSE'S MOUTH



Firing arrows at objects and statues often makes useful things happen.

Collect the circlet from here and then pay a visit to Eadric (the fat geezer in the picture below).



Your first postal delivery service is to this King (Eadric The Portly One).



Sailing between the different villages is fun. A welcome break from everyday adventuring.



Chat with everyone you possibly can in Heimdal 2. You can never have too much information.



Kitchen staff throughout the world are an inspired source of information.



Ever had the feeling you're being watched? Press the picture and wait.

GUARD



PROGRAMMERS : ACID SOFTWARE • PUBLISHER : GUILDHALL LEISURE (0302) 890000 • PRICE : £30 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

In the year 2716 the world will face the terrible threat of alien invasion, and Jonathan Nash will be dust. Let us hurry him to complete his review before death.



Death strikes from the skies. And from the ground. And from the place over there, in the corner. By the tool shed.

Here is what is bad about *Guardian*: the power-ups are far too difficult to collect. As soon as they appear they start to fall to the ground, and once they land or strike a building they explode. Unlike everything else in the game, power-ups don't cast shadows, which makes judging when to swoop in order to catch them extraordinarily hard.

Here is what is good about *Guardian*: everything except collecting power-ups. It's the kind of game where you hold your breath during the exciting bits, which is most of them, and where you rock around in your chair to the rhythm of the jinking ship on screen. It is, quite simply, *Defender* in first-person 3D, and it's utterly terrific. Even the plot's unusually entertaining: some nonsense about the universe imploding to a space 'only a few light

years in diameter', and everyone being squashed together and battling for the remaining planets (obviously ignoring the inconvenient physics of all that mass in a tiny area), with you more or less wasting your time fending off alien invasion, because everyone's going to be dead soon anyway. But it passes the time, so there you go.

The trick to *Guardian*'s success is that it's been written by someone who likes to play games. There is, for example, no time limit to completing a level: either you get the aliens, or they get you. And if you fail to prevent that level's buildings from being destroyed by the bombers, the game just gets madly harder rather than ending – so you can happily ignore the rules and instead revel in gloriously high-speed dogfights with alien patrols, blazing ripping broadsides at their ranks,



You can change the viewing angle freely. I prefer the long, high shot – you can easily see what's coming. A valuable tip, folks.



"I have no hesitation in awarding *Guardian* the title of Best CD32 Game Ever, Yes ever."



'Guard' the sharply defined housing blocks with your life. Or use them for cover, or destroy them yourself for cruel amusement.



The mothership swoops low, discharging bombers to perform their foul duties. Cleanse them with the dual lasers of truth.



Trees are fiendishly cunning and totally without mercy. Eliminate them to prevent unpleasant crashes at speed.

VERDICT

It's *Defender* (almost). But in 3D (definitely). Look, **it's**

IAN



Alas, Dandridge was ill-equipped for the sensational interdimensional hang-gliding experience.

skimming between city blocks to watch them slam amateurishly into the walls behind you, or even weaving through the pack to trick them into firing at each other. And thanks to the complete freedom of movement every blossomingly fiery explosive death is entirely your own fault – no set patterns here: if you want to flip through a torque-wrenching somersault and take the fight to that patrol dogging you mercilessly, you jolly well do so. There are no dodgy game mechanics to blame – you can even change the viewing angle to see more of the surrounding area, or play in ridiculous close-up. Whatever.

The other trick to *Guardian*'s success is that it's amazingly fast – not even the largely impossible third planet, which sees your cannon hammering at dozens of air and ground-based aliens, raining debris down on pyramids and missile batteries as you rocket over them, causes a noticeable flutter in the running speed. Not only is this a CD32-only game, folks, but a CD32-only game that's making the machine work. You lucky people.

TOTAL CARNAGE

There's nothing on the machine even to come close to *Guardian* in terms of excitement and fun: it's a total joy to play. The tongue-biting thrillingness of weaving through a petrified forest, chasing down a desperate bomber with a patrol ship blasting away behind you while more warp in all around is stunningly fabulous. The extremely high difficulty level (and

complete lack of passwords) work in favour of the game – the fact it's a free-form arcade game (rather than, say, a mapped-out platformer) means a level's never dull to replay, and there's a real sense of achievement and exhilaration when you complete a level. Long-term appeal? The game's attracted casual players by the dozen, and no one's yet beaten planet three of the ten to be liberated. (It's the tanks that do it. They're all over level 3.3, and they're twice as fast as you are, and the tricky devils home in on you, and everything. I hate them so.) And, anyway, it's not really about finishing the game – it's about wiping everyone else off the high-score table, like in the Good Old Days. Ah me.

I have no hesitation at all in awarding *Guardian* the title of Best CD32 Game Ever, yes ever, and that includes *Overkill* and *Pinball Fantasies* and they're not even machine-exclusive so there. The fatuous insanity displayed by Commodore in bundling *Dangerous Streets* with the CD32 should instantly be rectified with a new *Guardian* pack, and everyone already owning a machine should work for world peace by acquiring a copy of the game. *Guardian* – the game of champions. Ask for it by name. Or something.



Destroy all monsters and then rake the sinister grass lawns with searing flame to make sure they get the message.

A speedy reversal should see off this tenacious underling. Provided, of course, he doesn't, for example, shoot you.



"It's about wiping everyone else off the high-score table, like in the Good Old Days."



It is a chase of note. To the left our hero wheels to avoid what appears to be a TIE Interceptor, catching it a whack.

The enemy vanquished, our hero speeds to safety as demonstrated above. But runs straight into a giant flower. The clot.



Evil-minded circus tents skitter across the sands of Egypt and shoot at you with remarkable skill and judgement.

utterly terrific, and you really should play it.

90%

CANNON

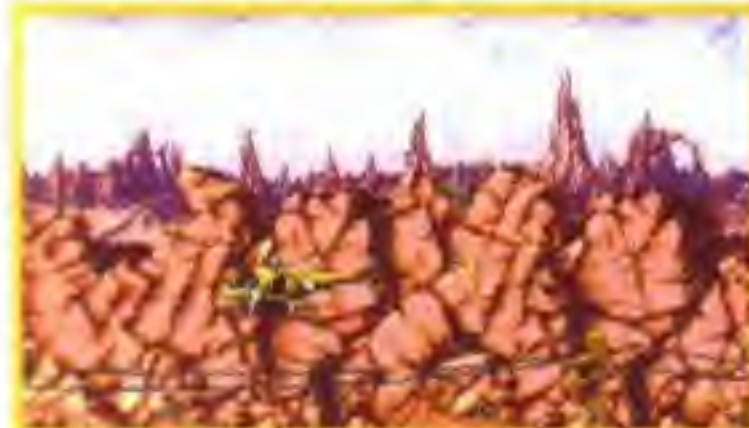
GREEN AND PLEASANT



The first levels are set in dense jungle, complete with groovy sound effects of birds and nasty, lurking things.



From there it's on to snowy levels. Curiously, your men never get the 'flu, even though they swim across lakes.



Then it's on to baking sands, wind-carved crags and locals with moustaches and comically large-brimmed hats.



Then it's a spin round James Herriot country, complete with shotgun-wielding farmers shouting 'Gerrort moy larnd'.



The final section's in bleak concrete bunkers populated by insatiable dossers and men with large guns. It's not nice.



Who do you get to review a blood-thirsty shoot-em-up? Cam Winstanley is the right man for the job.

In an ideal world, all human conflict, all civil strife, all internecine bickering would be resolved by a hard game of *Cannon Fodder*. Twenty minutes of running your little fellas around, lobbing grenades over walls and blasting away on full automatic would be enough to release all those pent up feelings of aggression and calm down the warring leaders, so they could come to some kind of agreement over tea and bickies.

This is a sort of real-time strategy wargame/shoot-em-up combo, with enough planning needed to stop the shooting from getting tedious but enough explosions and maimage to satisfy even the most bonkers-mad firearms fanatic.

The control system betrays the game's Amiga origins. It was designed to be played using a mouse controller, and to get the most out of the game, that's the best way to play it. Rather than controlling the lead man directly, you point the cursor to where you either want him to move or fire and press the appropriate button.

You can move while you fire and vice versa, so the action's fairly constant. You can even split your team up into smaller squads and as you control one squad, the other one will automatically defend themselves. It's all very clever.

The general idea is to kill everyone that's not in the same uniform as your guys, but within this framework, the Sensible boys have come up with enough variation to keep you hooked all the way through the 72 assignments. Saying that you either have to kill people, blow buildings up or rescue hostages simply doesn't give any indication of how different the missions are from each other, and going into detail would take up too much space, so here are a few examples:

You've got a two-man squad in the arctic and have to wipe out the enemy. They're pouring out of concrete bunkers, but since you've

only got grenades, you can't blow them up. You find a tank, jump in and start to chew up the bunkers and run over the fleeing enemy soldiers. They can't get you but BAM!!! the enemy tank can. You blast it, finish off the bunkers and arrive at the sea.

There's a cute seal nearby but as you get close to it, it explodes, taking out one of your blokes. The cads, rigging seaborne mammals with explosives, how dare they? Incensed by this loss of life, you swim your remaining man across the water, dash up the slope on the other side and take out a wooden hut with a grenade. Mission accomplished.

On another level you're in verdant pasture land, with only spring-loaded spikes and booby-trapped sheep to watch out for. After storming a hut you find a bomb-dropping helicopter, allowing you to assault a small, heavily-defended clearing at the far side of the river. Swooping in, you've got to clear out the defenders, land and then dash over to a heavy gun turret to take out all the buildings in the complex. Not an easy thing to do when everyone's shooting at you.

Despite the massive body counts, the total destruction of men and machines and the lavish amount of blood that spurts out of the dead and dying, *Cannon Fodder* still manages to be a lighthearted affair. The soldiers are too cartoony to be taken seriously, so when one trips a mine or gets a huge spear thrust through him, you tend to laugh at him, or when you discover that by shooting bodies, you can make them bounce and spurt across the screen, it's genuinely amusing.

It's one of the best games around on any format, and it's hard to find fault with any aspect of the gameplay, but the transition to the CD32 does add the problem of the controller. No matter how you practice, it's impossible to move the cursor around the screen as quickly and smoothly as you can with a

VERDICT Top shooty fun of the highest order, backed up by

FODDER



PROGRAMMER: SENSIBLE • PUBLISHER: VIRGIN (081) 946 2833 • PRICE: £39.99 • RELEASED: OUT NOW



How do you escape a relentless bomb-dropping chopper? In a jeep, that's how.



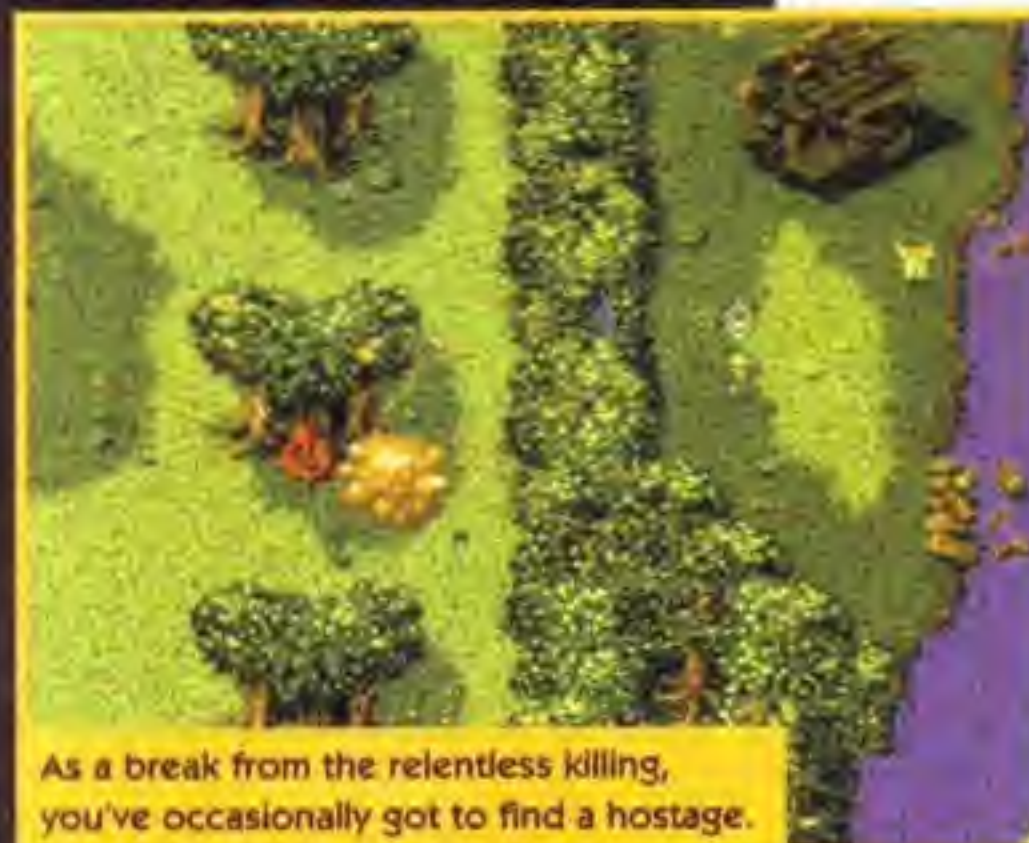
Payback time! That's you in the helicopter and you've got rockets. Run, die, panic, etc.



"It's one of the best games around on any format, and it's hard to find fault with any aspect of the gameplay"

mouse, which in game terms means you'll die more often and find it harder to progress if you play with the controller rather than a mouse.

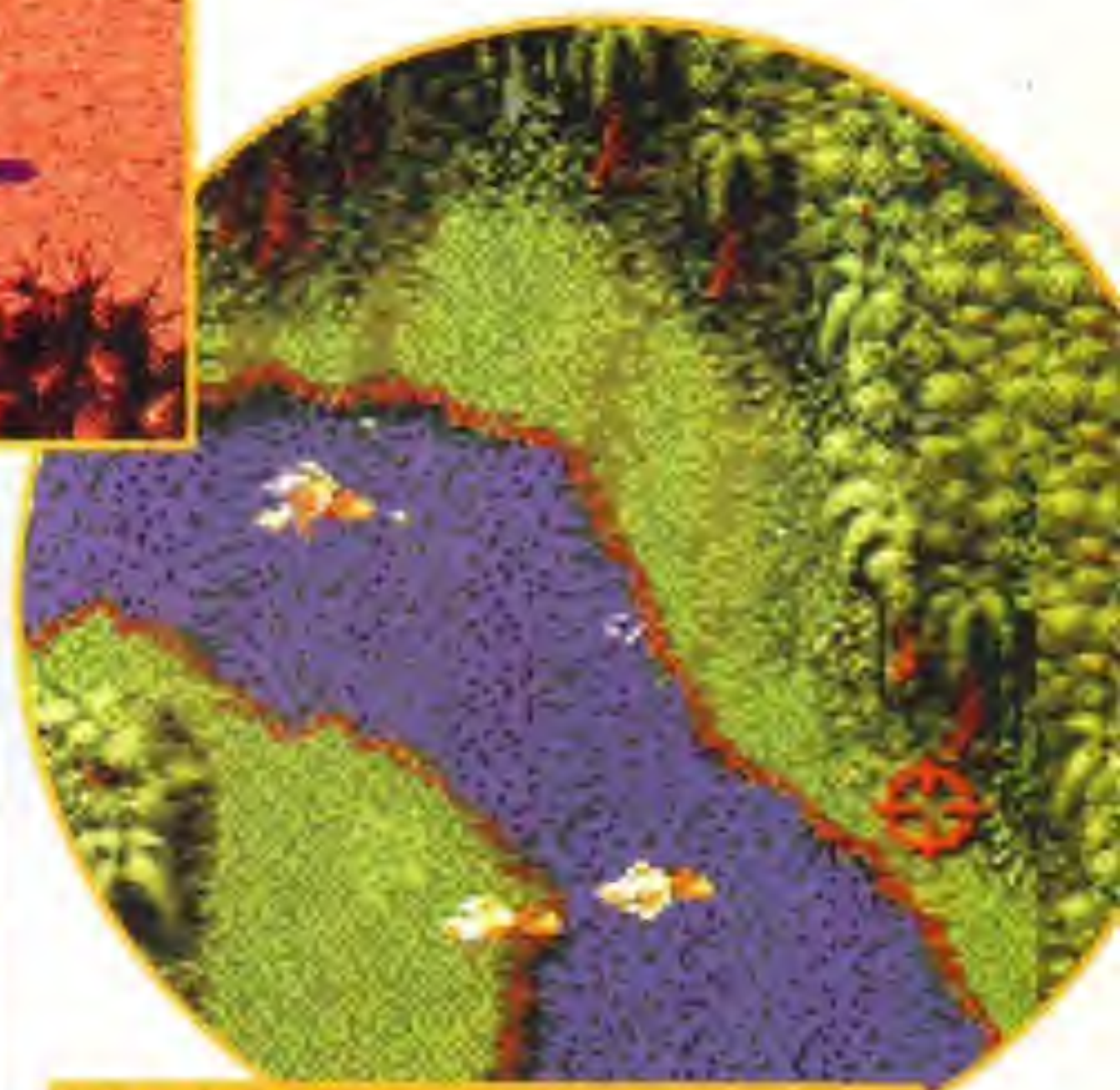
Ask yourself whether you're prepared to fork out another £10 for a mouse, and if you are, add another per cent or two to the score. It really makes that much of a difference.



As a break from the relentless killing, you've occasionally got to find a hostage.



To finish off the mission, you've then got to find the Red Cross tent. Simple.



So far as I can tell, the birds don't hurt you and you can't shoot them out of the sky. They're just sort of... there.



These are your initial conscripts at the start of the game. They're young, they're eager...



...and after a few missions, they're history. At least the bravest ones get nicer headstones.



Onwards to the end of the game, and you realise the high cost of your antics. Gulp.



And just to make you feel really bad, every soldier has a name. Ain't war hell, huh? Sob.

brilliant sound and graphics. A must for any format.

93%

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YO! JOE! (AF50 FG91%): This game really captivated us. OK it's a platform game but how many of those do we describe as 'truly great', 'a perfect example of the genre' and 'a complete stunner'? The reviewer even offered to buy anyone who didn't like the game a pint, and he's never had to.



A special twin-pack comprising both **NORTH & SOUTH** (AF37 B4%) and **F16 COMBAT PILOT** (AF3 FG94%): *North & South* - a cartoon-like simulation of the American Civil War - is a classic one or two-player strategy/action game while *F16 Combat Pilot* is one of the most realistic flight and combat simulators ever.



TERMINATOR 2 - THE ARCADE GAME (AF55 73%): Playing a terminator, you're up against Skynet and Cyberdyne in shoot-em-up city. *Terminator 2* is based on the coin-op - don't ever show this game to anyone who claims there is too much violence in computer games. As we said when we reviewed it: 'A wholly satisfying shoot-em-up'.

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SOCCER KID



PROGRAMMERS : NEIL ADAMSON, NIGEL LITTLE & MATT FURNISS • PUBLISHER : KRISALIS (0709) 372290 •
PRICE : £29.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



The World Cup has been filched by trophy-hoarding aliens, only to shatter into tiny bits. Steve Bradley tries to piece it together.

THE STORY SO FAR...



A trophy-loving alien arrives over the stadium...



...cripes!, a laser beam lifts the World Cup skyward.



And by jove, he's as pleased as punch with it...



...until his ship collides with an asteroid and shatters.



One piece hits a city gent in old London town.



Another lands on a gondola in Italy's famous Venice.



Even the Statue Of Liberty can't hide from the Cup.



But good old Soccer Kid is ready for action.

See, aliens these days. Not content with producing elaborate patterns in cornfields, barely assuaged with hovering around in their Fancy Dan spaceships letting the odd person get a glimpse, yet never a photograph; scarcely mollified in sweeping some poor soul

into their lair before indulging in bizarre experiments, only to cast them back to their beds leaving them with a vaguely odd feeling that something 'funny' went on last night, they've now gone and done their worst. A crime so heinous that it defies belief. Yes, one of the rogues has pilfered the World Cup, and in full view of a watching world. And they couldn't even do it properly.

Let me elucidate. Please. The World Cup is underway and the gleaming silverware, sorry, goldware, is on display when a spaceship appears in the sky and a laser beam shoots forth lifting the trophy heavenward, only to collide with a passing asteroid, shatter into a thousand pieces and scatter over the four corners of the Earth.

'Now that's put the cat amongst the pigeons,' offers commentator John Motson. 'It's certainly a turn up for the books,' returns Trevor, 'and at the end of the day, football is the loser. You know me John, I never predict anything and I never will but if the trophy isn't returned, no-one will be able to lift the cup aloft'. John again, 'Trevor, you're not wrong and I think it

would be foolish to underestimate these aliens. We've never really come to terms with the foreign game and some of the players' antics. Surely they've gone too far this time?'

Back in a medium-to-large conurbation somewhere in England, perhaps a town similar to Stoke-on-Trent, or maybe even somewhere like Hemel Hempstead, a young chap with a real passion for the 'beautiful game' is decidedly miffed at the proceedings, having settled in front of the TV with a half pound of midget gems expecting an exemplary exhibition of football only to have the People From Outer Space undermine his anticipated evening's fun.

Having been born with a silver football in his mouth, Soccer Kid (as his mates are wont to call him) instinctively knew that finishing his midget gems simply wasn't an option, so he dashed upstairs, donned his football kit, grabbed his trusty ball and headed off in search of all the scattered parts of the World Cup which he would gather together and return to America in time for the grand final.

Soccer Kid must travel through a gloriously colourful parallax scrolling world, amassing the soccer cards to enable him to grab a piece of the World Cup before heading for the next country. His journey, fraught with danger takes him from his home town to London, on to Italy, Russia and Japan before hitting the streets of America.

But the delightfully animated Kid is blessed with great skills – he can boot the ball high in the air, keep it on his head, stand on the ball and leap skyward like a salmon, slide tackle, backheel and even perform marvellous overhead kicks. And he needs this vast array of talents to defeat the profusion of baddies he encounters along the way.

Soccer Kid is my favourite platform game of all time. The worlds are varied and beautifully drawn, while the levels, although commendably leathery, are fastidiously fair. Whether you're tackling farmers, Italian scooterists, Russian soldiers, Japanese inventors or American roadworkers, eventually, with practice you can find a way past them.

VERDICT Silky smooth and blessed with glorious talents,

Collect the football cards en route and you can head for the next level.



The speeding bullet train in Tokyo is one of the trickiest sections of all.



The spanner-chucking builders in rainy England can be dealt with by smacking the ball at them twice. Kick his head in!

The sprite moves fluidly and even a short bash at the game imparts the loving care and attention that has gone into producing *Soccer Kid*. Crikey, even the music soundtrack is funky and that is about as rare in a game as Jimmy Hill slagging off Brian McClair.

You have £30 burning a hole in your pocket. You want to buy yourself a platform game, preferably alluring in design and rich in gameplay. *Soccer Kid* does not, and will not disappoint.



"Even a short bash imparts the loving care that has gone into producing *Soccer Kid*"



American roadworkers are the driller killers. And look out for skateboarders.

Soccer Kid is **simply skill.**

93%

SENSIBLE SOCCER INTERNATIONAL EDITION



PROGRAMMERS : SENSIBLE SOFTWARE • PUBLISHER : RENEGADE (071) 481 9214 PRICE : £19.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



Terry and Bobby Sensible finally get to don South American footie strips.

It's more than a game of two halves. It's a game of two years and it's getting even better. Steve Bradley explores the phenomenon that is *Sensible Soccer*.

CHOOSE CUP TEAMS.

BANIA	ARGENTINA	P	AUSTRIA
LGUJH	BOLIVIA		BRAZIL
LGARIA	CAMEROON		COLOMBIA
QATIA	CYPRUS		CZECHOSLOVAKIA
NMARK	ENGLAND		ESTONIA
ERDE ISLES	FINLAND		FRANCE
RMANY	GREECE		HOLLAND
NGARY	ICELAND		ISRAEL
ILY	LATVIA		LITHUANIA
XEMBOURG	HALTA		MEXICO
ROCCO	NIGERIA		N. IRELAND
RMAY	POLAND		PORTUGAL
P. OF IRELAND	ROMANIA		RUSSIA
N MARINO	SAUDI ARABIA		SCOTLAND
OVENIA	SOUTH KOREA		SPAIN
EDEN	SWITZERLAND		TURKEY
RAINE	U.S.A.		WALES

OK

The International Edition includes all the teams from the last World Cup with accurate player data but, fortunately, the home nation teams have not been forgotten.

Sensible Soccer is a legend in its own lunchtime. (We play it every lunchtime.) It first burst on to the Amiga way back in the Summer of 1992 and has been selling steadily ever since – in fact, it refuses to leave the charts. Versions of the game are available for the Atari ST and shortly, for the Jaguar, the Mega Drive, the SNES, PC, Game Boy, PC CD-ROM and Game Gear. In fact it's possibly the most widely played game of the moment and if you haven't heard of it, where have you been? Probably not on Earth.

Sensible Soccer was created by a team of computer and football enthusiasts; by people who played former Amiga favourite *Kick Off 2* for hours on end and then decided to go out and write the ultimate football simulation. Two years down the line, *Sensi* (as it's popularly known) remains untouchable. Even EA's huge selling cart, *FIFA International Soccer* hasn't quite matched the beautiful simplicity of *Sensi*'s gameplay, nor has it captured the essential feel that makes *Sensible Soccer* a game that gets better the more you play it.

Sensible Soccer International Edition is basically an upgrade of the 92/93 version of the game and it now features referees who dish out red and yellow cards. All the USA World Cup teams are featured and the European club teams have been updated.

Formalities over, and without further ado, not wanting in any way

to stand on ceremony for even the briefest of moments, permit me to indulge myself. *Sensible Soccer* is my favourite game ever. Yes, there comes a time when you have to stand up and be counted and my colours remain firmly nailed to the *Sensible* mast, even after two years.

The *International Edition*, if truth be known isn't vastly better than its predecessor, but publishers Renegade have always been scrupulously fair when it comes to *Sensible* upgrades. If you have the original CD³² version and you want this version you can stick the original in the post together with a cheque for £8 and you can re-run the Brazil V Italy World Cup Final, pair South Korea with Slovenia or perhaps take the Nigerians to Lithuania.

Now it may sound like this game is for football sadoes (like me); for folk who insist that the Croatian stopper's name is correctly spelled; that Maccabi Tel-Aviv's away kit sports the correct colours and yes, you would be right. But *Sensible Soccer* not only offers attention to detail, it shoves in bucketloads of playability and even those that think the round ball game the very tool of the devil can happily join a 20-man league, or attempt to take Skonto Riga to the UEFA Cup final.

The wide pitch view together with the tiny sprites enables you to execute a short passing game – you always know where your players are. But then you can always knock the ball straight from defence to the

sensible
SOCCER
INTERNATIONAL EDITION
v1.2

VERDICT

The greatest, the most playable, the **longest**



Time is running out for the Red Devils. Surely the impressive Turks cannot scupper their European Holy Grail yet again? European club sides are included, and updated.

strikers and take a shot on goal. The controls are amazingly simple – the pad directs your players and you can use it to bend and lift the ball, while the fire button shoots, passes and tackles. Easy. Initially, you find dribbling impossible but persevere and you can literally run from one end of the field to the other, dodging daintily past the opposition. And oh

the joy of seeing your first diving header billow the back of the net.

You need this game. You want this game. You only have £20 to your name, the clothes are dropping off your back and your stomach's rumbling. Sod it, go and buy *Sensible Soccer* in it's best incarnation yet. You certainly won't regret it.

Now I wouldn't for a minute suggest that the striker is about to take a dive. Oh no.



Little did the defender and goalkeeper realise that the ref had blown for half-time.

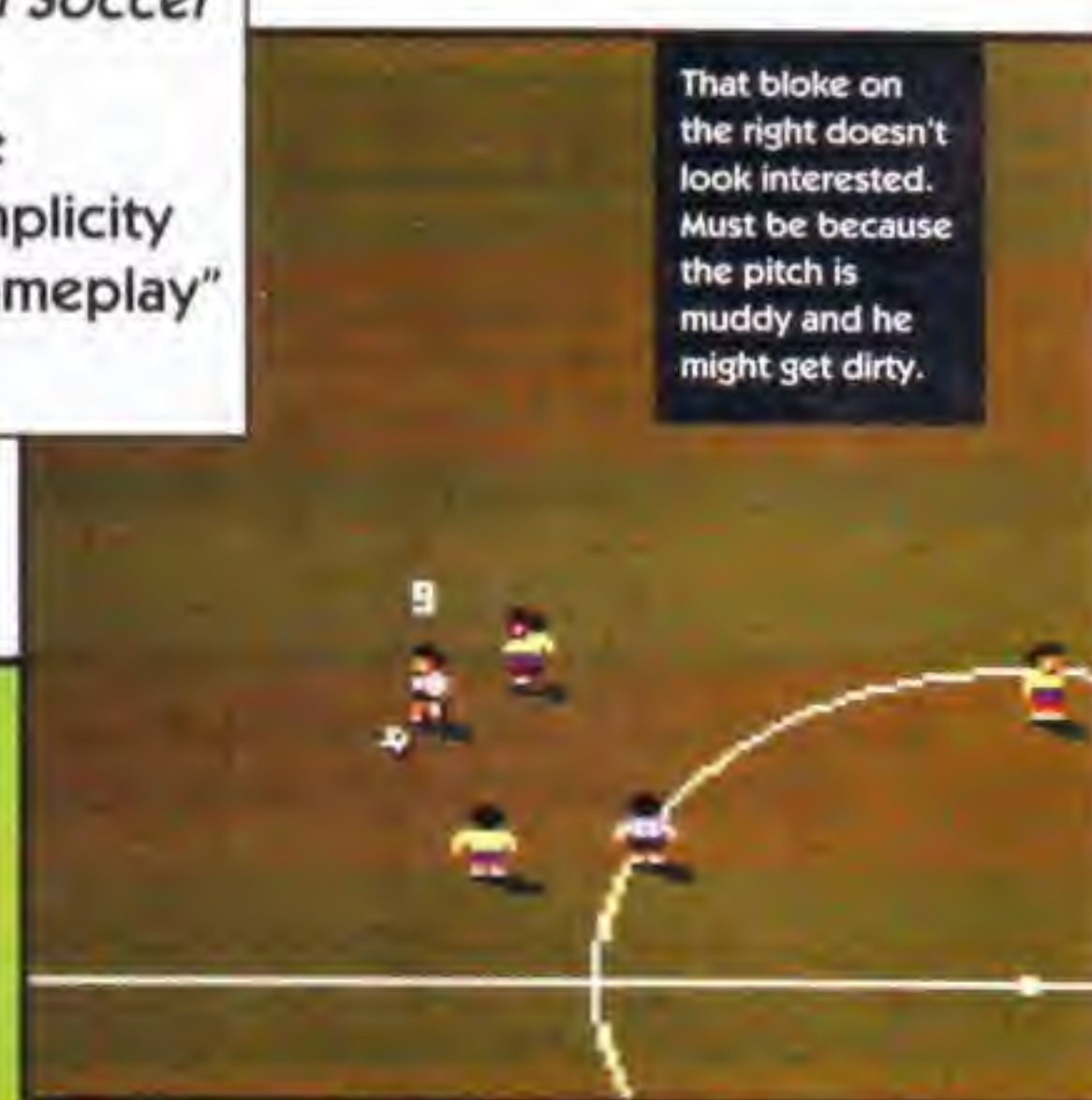


A dreadful foul, a glorious strike on goal – it's all happening at the moment.



"Even EA's huge-selling cart, *FIFA International Soccer* hasn't quite matched the beautiful simplicity of *Sens's* gameplay"

That bloke on the right doesn't look interested. Must be because the pitch is muddy and he might get dirty.



The ref issues the first yellow card of the day to the hapless Colombian.



lasting football game of the lot is available for your machine.

94%

JETSTRIKE



PROGRAMMER: SHADOW SOFTWARE • DISTRIBUTOR: KONPART (0757) 986003 • PRICE: £54.00 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

It's difficult! It's violent! It's the world's only flight sim with a sense of humour! Dave Green doesn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Isn't it about time there was a CD32 version of the Spectrum all-time rubbish classic, *Harrier Attack*? What do you mean, 'no'? Anyway, like its Speccy predecessor, *Jetstrike* CD32 tries to combine the realism of a flight sim with the excitement of an arcade game. Sadly, it's a bit of a failure in this respect – but a gloriously entertaining failure nonetheless.

Put simply, it's a side-view air-combat shoot-em-up – with bombs. Plenty of bombs, in fact – as far as I can make out most of the game (and the 007-esque plotline) is a tenuous excuse for you to select your favourite plane of the last 30 years, load it up with some seriously offensive firepower, then head off to rain death from the skies. Don't believe me? Here's the detailed combat briefing from one of the earlier missions: An enemy submarine is patrolling the area. Destroy it!

And destroy things you will. Once you've got over the weird control system (Up and Down make the plane either climb or dive – depending on which

way you're going), you'll realise that the sheer quantity – and quality – of explosions contained in the average *Jetstrike* mission more than make up for the teeny-weeny in-flight graphics and the dodgy dogfights. It can be a truck, a bridge, a building or even part of your own airbase – if it's part of the foreground graphics, you can blow it away. Groovy.

If you're not feeling that violent, you can try the training missions, or the Aerolympics section, which asks you to do patently ridiculous things



A Hawk trainer swoops low over its home base – after accidentally bombing it a little.



Ker-wumph! These guys will read the small print in the holiday brochure more carefully next year.



You can scrape the helicopter winchman along the ground without a single word of complaint from him.

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a cluster bomb...



1 In the full game, there's three pages of planes to choose from – each with realistic flying characteristics.



2 The helicopters are easier to control than the jets, but not as much fun as the biplanes or the dragon.



3 For the weapons enthusiast, there's another three screens of unashamedly dangerous hardware.



4 If you're bored of bombs, pick a cannon, a flamethrower, a cruise missile – or a nuke.

VERDICT Mad air combat for people who just don't

like flying jets through underground tunnels. But, in the end, you'll come back to what *Jetstrike* does best: air-to-ground annihilation.

You can tell this is what the game is all about: the cheesy music (including the militaristic *Jetstrike Theme* and the daft rock number, *Drop The Bomb*) fits really well with the *Top Gun*-style antics on screen, while some of the little touches – like the vocal sample saying 'Have a nice day' when you let rip with a runway denial device – are either the work of a genius or a madman.

THE UNPROFESSIONALS

Jetstrike on the Amiga was crying out for a CD32 conversion. For a start, most joysticks aren't up to controlling the plane, raising and lowering the undercarriage, firing one of the three weapons, or ejecting if you get into trouble; so having each of these assigned to a (usually sensible) combination of CD32 buttons comes as a breath of fresh air.

Secondly, the original *Jetstrike* hadn't been programmed very well, which meant you had to put up with some horrendous disk-accessing delays every time you crashed – given the unique aircraft control system, this happened to beginners about every seven or eight seconds.

The disc accessing isn't so noticeable now, though there's enough of the unprofessionalism left to retain the original's charm. For instance, take the sampled radio conversation that's supposed to be between the pilot and the control tower – it sounds just like it's the same bloke doing two different voices. Perhaps it is.

If you can forget quirks like these (notice that I said quirks, not flaws), you'll find a good old-fashioned, bonkers game lurking behind the tricky controls and 80s graphics. My only major criticism is the price: there may be hundreds of missions, but you'll get bored of flying left and right dropping bombs, no matter how good the explosions are. At £26, *Jetstrike* seems like 10 quid too much.



Disappointingly, you can't shoot down your own fuel transport plane. Just imagine the explosion...



Only a fool would try to fly through a tunnel like this. A fool – or someone playing *Jetstrike*.



Dogfighting is not this game's strong point. For a start, it's hard to use your bombs effectively.

JETSTRIKE

For some strange reason, the *Jetstrike Theme* reminds me of that bit at the end of *Star Wars* when they all get given medals.



"A good old-fashioned, bonkers game lurking behind the tricky controls"

Jetstrike insists on giving a blow-by-blow account of the aircraft damage – which is not so useful in this case.



If air-to-sea missiles miss their intended target they still make a lovely splash.



Loads of missions – loads of choice. Assuming that you like flying from left to right (or right to left), that is.



There's a massive explosion every time your plane crashes. Get used to it – you'll be seeing it a lot.



care. But *Jetstrike* is a bit pricey for what you get.

76%

LAST NINJA 3



PROGRAMMER: DAVE COLLINS • PUBLISHER: SYSTEM 1
(081) 864 8212 • PRICE: £14.99 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

Steve Bradley battles his way through six levels of puzzling, beat-em-up action.



"Despite the title, this is no beat-em-soundly-until-they-surrender affair"



An unusual sight faced Armakuni as he entered the temple. A big bird had been chopped in half, yet blood emission was minimal. What could it be?

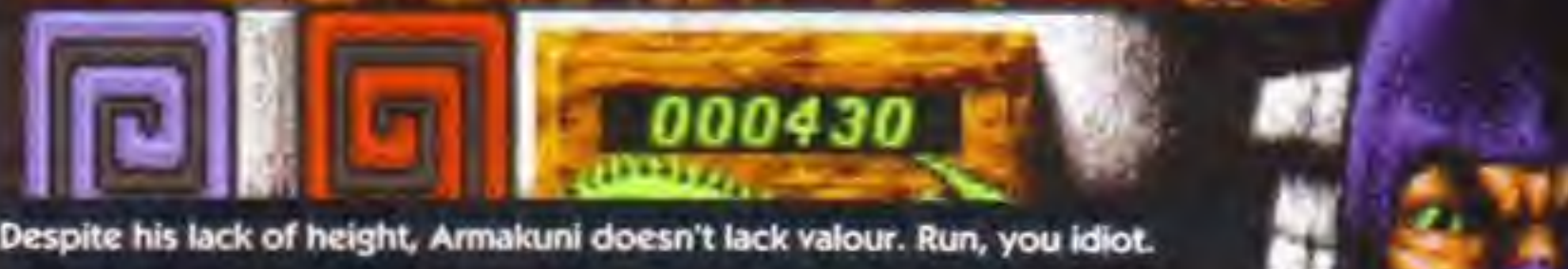
After a quick jog around the block, our hero must dispose of yet another of Shogun's henchmen.



Fall off the edge and you lose a life. So watch where you're going.



The size of the sprites is a major obstacle when it comes to fighting – they're simply too small. You just end up wagging madly.



Despite his lack of height, Armakuni doesn't lack valour. Run, you idiot.

It must be tough being the last ninja. You spend your days on your own, practising complex martial arts moves in front of the mirror – which is none too easy when you're 1,000 years old. So you phone up Leonardo from the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, but he can't come down the pub because he's washing his shell and no, you can't join the gang until you change your name to Picasso. But you are proud Armakuni, and anyway, you don't want to live down a sewer – your pyjamas, sorry I mean oriental pants, would get wet.

But wait, for evil is at hand in the shape of Shogun Kunitoki and his henchmen who have taken over a sacred ninja temple and guess who's the man for the clearing up job? Not those heroes in half shells, for sure. Your task is to battle your way through six isometric-viewed symbolic chambers; Earth, Wind and Fire (it's no, ahem, Boogie Wonderland, of that you can be assured), together with Water, and the real toughies Limbo and Void.

But despite the title, this is no beat-em-soundly-until-they-surrender affair, for there are both puzzles and strategic elements involved. Scattered around the levels are a variety of tools which are either the key to unlocking the levels or parts that can be assembled to build better weapons. For example, collect two tree branches and a chain and hey presto, you have yourself a nunchuka.

Unfortunately, Kunitoki's henchmen are on virtually every corner and aggro is always on the cards. Now this would not be such a

problem if the darned joypad control wasn't so erratic – and if the passageways didn't have sheer drops down the side.

One minute you're wandering along, happy as a ninja; you attempt to turn the corner only to tumble off the edge when you thought you were making the perfect manoeuvre. And the drop doesn't look that bad anyway. OK, so you're 1,000 years old but surely you can survive a bit of a fall. And anyway, who built this bloody temple? Couldn't they have knocked up a little wall, or even a fence? Prepare to get extremely frustrated on your thankless quest.

Bushido power is an important element in *Last Ninja 3*. This is basically to do with honour; for instance, if you do an un-armed bloke over with a sword, your Bushido levels sink because it was a killing without honour, so you have to be both tough and fair. I ask you, these blokes wouldn't think twice if they had a sub-machine gun would they?

The gameplay crosses generic boundaries and graphically it's reasonably pretty but, unfortunately, the game seems to want to be all things to all gamers which is virtually impossible. Beat-em-up fans will find the controls rather unwieldy while RPG fans will find the puzzles laughably simple to solve.

Despite my misgivings though, *Last Ninja 3* isn't all bad and hey, it's only 15 knicker. You can certainly have fun even though it's occasionally obscured by a few design faults. There is no let up in the action and some tasty bosses ensure it's no breeze to complete.

VERDICT

Attractive beat-em-up, puzzle solving fare let down by some **annoying flaws**.

70%

A long time ago in a land far away, four adventurers assembled for a noble quest. They were to journey to distant lands, face terrible dangers that would tax their mental and physical abilities and perform heroic deeds. Yes, you guessed it, they had to beat the crap out of everything.

Legacy Of Sorasil is really the archetypal slash-and-adventure-em-up classic. If you were lucky enough to see it in the floppy version then you'll know what I mean.

You select four characters to make up a balance of might and magic in your team, then set off on a series of nine adventures. Once your eyes have got used to the isometric angles of everything, you'll have no trouble manoeuvring around the corners of castles, forests and dungeons that make up all the different levels.

Each character takes it in turn to use up their movement allocation. I suppose – if you really wanted to – four people could play the game, each person controlling one character. Moves are used up attacking enemies, searching for traps and treasure, opening doors and, er, moving.

Herein lies the first problem. Although you can display a map at any time and at no movement cost, you can't actually see that far ahead on the main display. This means that you constantly have to look at the map, and engaging monsters in large open areas is exceedingly tedious.

Likewise the movement behind walls. The screen display ghosts the wall a character is behind, but if there are other objects or monsters behind it your only chance of finding them is by checking the map. The graphics are pretty and atmospheric but not very functional.

Playing this game with a controller pad is also very annoying. For example, to clear a trap you have to press the green button to get to the control panel, select the inventory, pick the toolkit, exit the toolkit, move the pointer to the trap and press the red button – for every trap. This soon gets very tiresome.

You start off with very little equipment. Some is found on the way, but to really equip your characters you must stop at a trading centre. These appear at the end of

LEGACY OF SORASIL



PROGRAMMER: KEVIN DUDLEY • DISTRIBUTOR: GREMLIN
(0748) 753453 • PRICE: £3.99 • RELEASED: OUT NOW



Grab your sword, pack your caltrops and hit the vaguely signposted road to adventure with Nick Veitch.

the scenario. If you have been ruthless in your searching you will have found enough cash to buy some fearsome hardware – you need it, the bad guys get progressively harder. It isn't enough just to whiz through a section via the quickest route, you have to gain enough gold to buy weapons, otherwise you will be hopelessly outclassed in the next section.

This relates to another problem in the game. You can only save your game when you are between scenarios, not during them. As the scenarios can easily take well over an hour to complete (even when you know exactly what you are doing) this can be a bit of a bind. I know there is very little memory for saved games on the CD32, but there ought to be some way of encoding the necessary information into a reasonably small file.

The graphics are very much the same as the floppy version. There are no extended animation sequences, so it makes you wonder what all the CD space was used for. I wouldn't like to say that *Legacy Of Sorasil* was just a cynical shovelware effort. That belies the depth of the game. Although it isn't perfect, it is probably the finest example of this genre available on the CD32. It should grace any serious collection of hack and slash adventures.

There are plenty of outdoor locations as well as dungeons.



This map is essential to your progress.



"It is probably the finest example of its genre available on the CD32"

One swift flick of the wrist...



...And another monster bites the paving stones.



It's pretty, but you have no choice about where you go.

VERDICT A sword-swishing dungeon fest worth a place in any collection.

78%

DARKS



PROGRAMMERS : MIKE DAWSON & OTHERS • PUBLISHER : CYBERDREAMS (071) 328 3267 • PRICE : £29.99 • RELEASED : OUT

When aliens kidnapped Jonathan Davies and twisted his mind to their own sinister ends, he feared for his future on Earth. But no-one seems to have noticed yet, luckily.

This is Derek's house. Or, if you prefer, a relic of a dark past, or perhaps a dark future. Either way, it probably oughtn't to be leaning like that.



My house seems somehow, out of time, a relic of a dark past, or perhaps a dark future. A newspaper. A newspaper.



"Darkseed went on to engross Amiga owners everywhere, who eagerly lapped up its mucus-drenched atmosphere"



This place is a shambles. Reminds me of my last garage!

This is The Garage, where, logically enough, you'll find The Car. And in The Car, you'll find The Glovebox. Etc.



There's nothing funny about having your head impregnated with an alien lifeform.

Ever since *Alien* quite literally burst into our cinemas in 1977, programmers haven't been able to get enough of HR Giger. It seems that every other game is set in an HR Giger-influenced-inspired-esque world where chitin-clad monsters pick their way through pools of sticky mucus and lay their foul eggs in people's mouths. Or something.

So by the time Cyberdreams had set their hearts on a point-n-click adventure with a mucus/chitin/eggs setting, a degree of one-upmanship had crept in. Not only would Cyberdreams pack in even more HR Giger-based ickiness than ever before, they decided – but they would actually get HR himself to draw it all. That'd shut the rest of them up.

This was all in early 1993, and *Darkseed* went on to engross Amiga owners everywhere, who eagerly lapped up its mucus-drenched atmosphere. Now, nearly two years on, the time has come for a CD32 version. The mouse control has been replaced by a slightly cumbersome joystick

system that could have made better use of the buttons, and the on-screen dialogue is now echoed by a troupe of slightly distracted-sounding hams. But otherwise, it's the same game as before.

According to the manual, you control a character called Mike Dawson who's been digitised from a programmer of the same name, but if you look closely you can

see that it's actually Derek Griffiths. As the game opens, Derek is surrounded by aliens who're planting an embryo in his forehead. But he wakes up to find it was only a dream. Or was it? Or WAS it? He's got a terrible headache, that's for sure, and the new house he's just moved into seems horribly creepy.

In terms of raw mechanics, *Darkseed* isn't all that impressive a

game. It doesn't give you an enormous playing area to explore – about 70 locations, many of them completely empty. It will drive you to despair with minuscule objects concealed against the scenery – a pin on the floor of the library, or a group of grey smudges, one of which turns out to be a pocket watch – but the cursor does at least change shape when it passes over something interactable-with. It offers few deviations from the main storyline. It bombards you with superfluous description of the 'The table's surface is smoothly polished' variety.

The dialogue is uninspired and littered with spelling errors. And it commits the capital offence of being played in real-time, with a certain number of puzzles that need to be solved each day or you lose, so you will constantly be having to start again from the beginning until you get it right. *The Secret Of Monkey Island* (regarded by a small but influential minority to be the only point-'n'-click adventure that's actually any good) would crush it between forefinger and thumb.

But *Darkseed* does have a few tricks up its sleeve, the main one being the Giger stuff, which to start off with isn't all that prominent. There's a nasty bit with a baby that transforms into an alien near the beginning, and the recurring nightmare, but it's not until Day Two (out of three) that you find you can walk through a mirror in your living room into a bizarre alien replica of your house.

All the rooms are in the same places, but the colour scheme is bluey-grey and there are alien incubators all over the place. And it gets a lot more subtle than that, with the real world's characters having alien counterparts, and actions Derek performs in one reality having repercussions in the other.

Darkseed will take you ages to finish, but for all the wrong reasons. You'll end up switching the speech off because the music, with which it's inextricably entwined, is so poor. And it's really not half as exciting as it pretends to be. But you won't mind, because the parallel alien dimension idea is such a good one.

VERDICT

The putrescent outpourings of HR

Access
Show
Features



Amiga Format



CD-ROM Today



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BUBBLE AND SQUEAK



PROGRAMMER : ALEX SLATER • PUBLISHER : AUDIOGENIC (081) 424 2244 • PRICE : £29.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



"Bubble And Squeak is a platform game cocktail of three parts"



Bubble and Squeak run for their lives as water begins to fill the Diamond Foundry. Well, maybe stroll for their lives...



Pick up a sub icon and at the end of each level our dynamic duo enter a shooty, er, sub-stage.

Bubble and Squeak are two of the cutest characters on the CD³². So naturally Steve Jarratt enjoys watching them drown.



(Left) Charlie Br— I mean Bubble — discovers a gumball dispenser. It costs three coins for Squeak to support his unhealthy habit.



(Right) Under the influence of all those strange additives, Squeak now offers Bubble a piggy-back ride.

Anyone expecting this game to be a ripping tale of swashbuckling adventure, featuring rampaging cabbage and mashed potatoes will be mildly upset, for the Bubble and Squeak of this piece are a heroic duo of minor proportions. Squeak a creature from the land of Grool; Bubble a small Charlie Brown lookalike.

The two little chaps have been thrown together, the victims of unusual circumstances; mismatched comrades in arms against the dreaded Kat Of Nine Tails and his army of decidedly wimpy-looking aliens.

In a typical tale of despot-overthrowing and planet-salvation, your aim is to get Bubble and Squeak to pair up and then escort them to the end of the ubiquitous level, signified by a goalpost.

The route is copiously littered with gems for the collecting of, aliens for the bashing of and ledges for the jumping on to. Of course, this is common platform fare: the twist — every good platform game should have one — comes in the way that Bubble and Squeak (under your guidance) have to work as a team. You have direct control of Bubble while Squeak sort of hops along in tow — unless directed otherwise.

Occasionally, there are platforms or switches which can't be reached

and so Bubble can stand on Squeak's head or get Squeak to hurl him up in the air. Similarly, Bubble can boot Squeak along, turning him into a giant pinball. This move is used either to shunt Squeak around the level quickly, or in order to collect gems which are out of Bubble's reach.

Squeak also has a penchant for bubblegum and collected coins can be exchanged for said confectionery whenever you happen upon a gumball dispenser.

With the power of E numbers, saccharin and artificial flavouring coursing through his veins Squeak metamorphoses into one of three super-Squeaks, able to jump as high as Bubble, fly, or take on a menacing appearance. While in this gum-induced state, he carries Bubble on his back and can crush aliens just by landing on them.

Completing the level requires that both Bubble and Squeak pass the goalpost together, and as an added incentive to maintain the partnership, the landscape slowly fills up with water. So if you leave Squeak in one place for too long, while you go off exploring the upper reaches of the level, chances are that he'll drown.

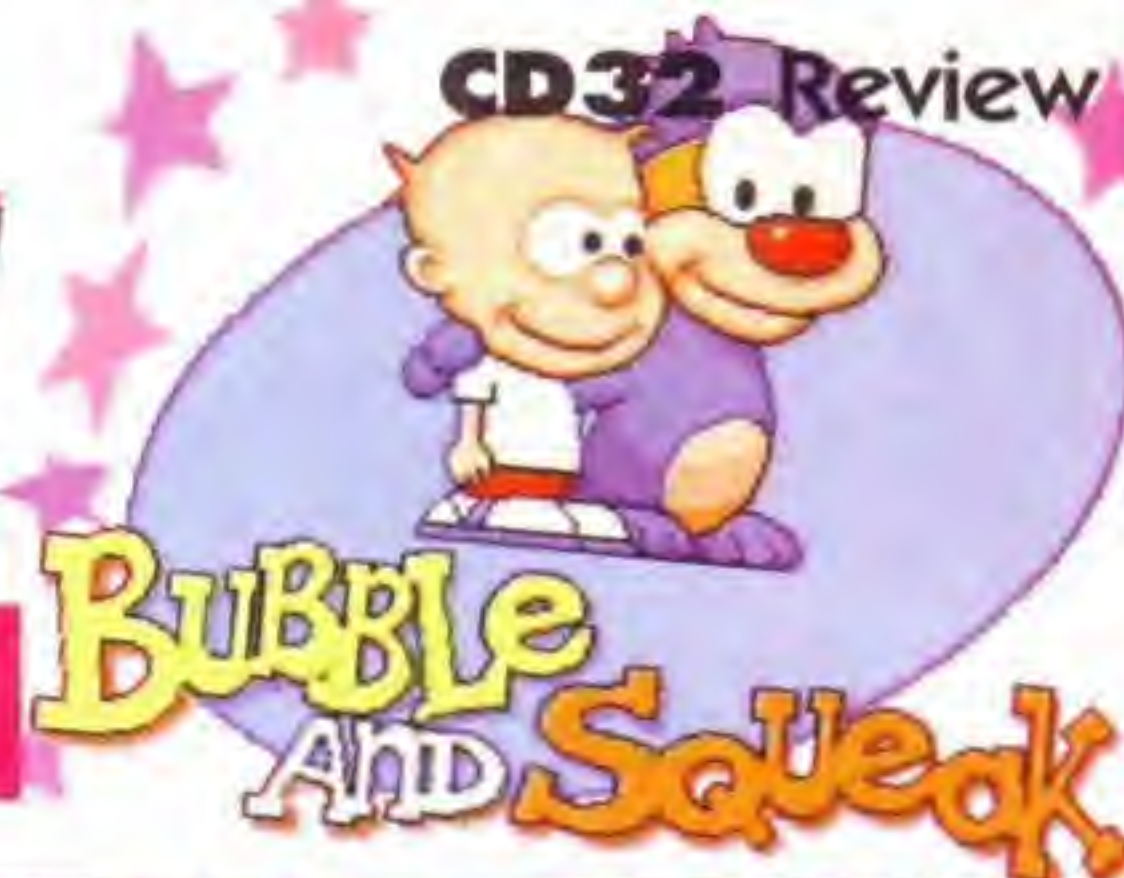
But, much as this is a clever gameplay element, it's also the main source of the dreaded foe frustration. For Squeak can, at times, be a bumbling idiot with all the mental agility of a Sainsbury's carrier bag. The phrase 'Jump, you stupid bugger!' was uttered several times during my play session. And it's even more annoying trying to lure him into position when you've got water sloshing about your ankles — and rising rapidly.

Each level sprawls (as most platform games are wont to do) across many screens, so there's a degree of reconnaissance to do and the occasional leap of faith, although you can look one screen above and below by pressing the buttons on the front of the CD³² controller.

Despite a few early deaths and the aforementioned frustration, I warmed to *Bubble And Squeak*. It's as inoffensive a game as you can find, with no gore or unpleasantness. The CD tunes bumble painlessly away in the background and the few sound effects are soundly effective.

VERDICT The video game equivalent of a baby lamb armed

SQUEAK



It's also a very pretty looking game with slick parallax scrolling, good colour schemes and detailed scenery – although certain games from Nintendo and Sega have been more than inspirational in the design. The collision detection is a tad wayward though, which, for instance, results in Bubble getting hit by spikes which are patently nowhere near him.

Given the vastness and wealth of levels, the inclusion of passcodes is a mercy. But the fact that the game can't restart you on the last level you played means that you have to re-enter the passcode again each time. Which is just a bit crap, really.

Bubble And Squeak is a platform game cocktail consisting of three parts *Super Mario*, one part *Fire & Ice*, with a dash of *Sonic The Hedgehog* and the merest twist of *Lemmings* (well, not much *Lemmings* actually, but it sounds good). The mix of platform and puzzle is appealing, but be warned, the later stages are devilishly difficult.



(Left) Squeak hurls Bubble up into the air in order that he might reach those gems (although he never quite makes it). (Right) Bubble gets his own back by kicking Squeak all over the shop, *Sonic* style.



Anyone who's seen *Super Mario World* on the SNES might have an attack of déjà vu while playing the first level of *Bubble And Squeak*. Possibly.



Bubble can jump gaps with ease. Squeak, however, is an inept bumbling buffoon and plummets like a brick.

Against the dramatic backdrop of an electrical storm, Bub avoids pools of, erm, boiling chocolate.

HOW TO AVOID A NASTY CASE OF RISING DAMP...



Step 1: Get Squeak to stand still, so Bubble can jump on his head and use his dim-looking pal as a launch pad. Bubble can now reach that previously inaccessible ledge.



Step 2: Bubble collects the vile *Habitat*-style authentic African vase and places it thus. Squeak can't jump up on to the ledge so Bub has to kick him around the scenery.



Step 3: Both chums are now on the ledge, temporarily safe from the rising water. Of course, they both drowned horribly not long after this picture was taken.

with an Uzi – cute but well hard.

79%

JAMES POND 3: OPERATION STARFISH



PROGRAMMERS : CHRIS SORRELL (CD32 VERSION DEAN ASHTON) • PUBLISHER : MILLENNIUM SOFTWARE
(0223) 846023 • PRICE : £34.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



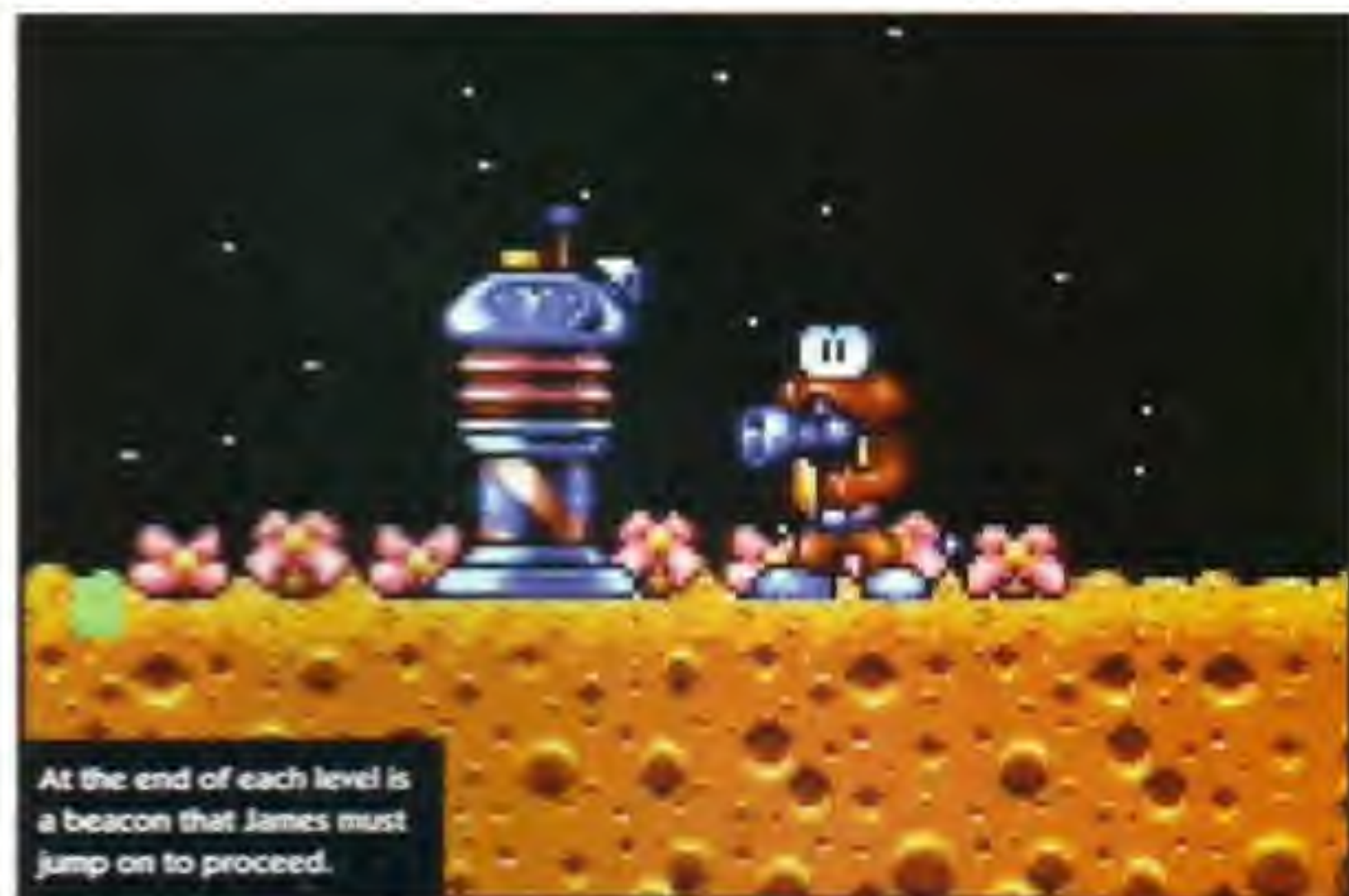
James Pond is back and this time he's bringing his pocket guide to every other platform game ever in the history of platform games as Chris Buxton discovers.



Like all the best heroes, James Pond is good at teetering on platforms.



"A well-executed potted history of platform gaming wrapped up in a silly, playable package"



At the end of each level is a beacon that James must jump on to proceed.

Call me pedantic but it seems that James Pond has undergone a few unnatural biological changes since he first appeared. He started off as simple goldfish secret agent, waddling about on his fins and battling bad puns and bad guys alike. Then along came *James Pond 2: Robocod* with our hero sporting a useful extending midriff, although the transformation from goldfish to cod is perhaps more astounding. In *James Pond 3: Operation Starfish* the telescopic torso has gone, and his fins look as if they've changed into legs. Charles Darwin would be impressed.

Now, every console needs its great platformers... and *James Pond 3: Operation Starfish* has nicked ideas from practically every great platformer on every previous console. Of course, platform games are nothing new but Millennium obviously put in many hours of research on *Sonic The Hedgehog* and *Super Mario World* before designing this game. Practically every aspect of *James Pond 3* has been seen elsewhere before but the game isn't any worse for that – if anything, it's what makes the game.

The typical *Pond* level is a huge rollercoaster that you can run through at a terrific pace collecting hundreds of little moons. Blocking your way are the native bad guys of the level – they change with each area so in the Cheese areas you'll face cats and mice but in the Custard areas you'll face blobs of custard. To complete a level you have to find and hit a beacon – it's usually at the far right of a level so just keep running and you're bound to get there.

Control is good – you can use the run and jump buttons with your thumb – but it can be hard to hit some blocks and platforms as James does like to slide around

them. You can, and probably will, start off by racing through each level as fast as you can just to get to the next one but hang on. If you do barrel through every level you'll miss the many bonuses and extra weapons that can be collected but, more importantly, you could miss a warp to a bonus level or you could open up a new area on the vast map.

To be honest, the levels in *James Pond* can get repetitive as they keep on chucking the same old tricks at you. You want to run through the bits of the levels that you know have no goodies in but you go so fast that can't you possibly avoid, or even see the nasties in the way. It's all a bit stop-start which can get

annoying – after all, what's the point in being able to run fast if the game won't let you?

Thankfully, there are a lot of neat things that make *James Pond 3* worth playing. Graphically, it's very pretty with colourful, silly characters and none of the garish backgrounds that made *James Pond 2* a real eyestrain. You can set free Finnius Frog, a fellow agent held captive by Dr Maybe (I won't trouble you with the plot), and use him to reach areas that James can't get to. There are loads of clever gadgets to collect like a haunted TV which acts as a portable elevator, a gun which fires cupcakes and Fruit Suits which turn James into a variety of giant fruits.

By now, you should know what you're getting with *James Pond 3* – a well-executed potted history of platform gaming wrapped up in a silly, funny, playable package. So, is it worth buying? Well, apart from a tiny amount of speech and a small, digitised cartoon intro there's precious little to show that this is a game on the CD32. But if you're not looking for knockout visuals and want a huge, undemanding, unoriginal platformer then you'll be more than happy with this game.



VERDICT

Quality platformer that takes the best bits of other

The ghost always returns to the broken TV set, so if you hold on to the TV you've got an instant lift!

Three levels down and only another 97 or so to go. Egad! Will you ever reach the end?

Attacked by a rat in a Noddy car, James tries to escape using his spring-heeled shoes.

Here's Pond looking the secret agent in the digitised cartoon intro to the game. It looks a little rough but it's quite funny.

Bizarre and quite unmagical mushrooms are all over the place in the Cheese Islands.

Hit certain special blocks and you'll be rewarded with a cascade of bonus moons.

Skipping and jumping is one thing, but if you want to play *James Pond 3* as a points-chaser you can.

games and bundles them together in **one tasty package.**

83%

SUPERFROG



PROGRAMMERS : ANDREAS TADIC AND RICO HOLMES • PUBLISHER : TEAM 17 (0924) 385903 •

PRICE : £14.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

He's small, he's green and he runs across your screen. Steve Bradley takes time out to attempt to win back his princess. But does he care?

There comes a time in every prince's life when he longs for a wicked witch to turn him into a frog, and for said witch to whisk away his beautiful bride to be. Take Prince Charles. Go on, take him. He would have been gloriously happy if, back

spiky he could do a more than passable impression of *Sonic The Porcupine*, though I

would be loath to suggest that this is a bad thing. The Frogmeister is blessed with great pace, although the overall feel is that the joypad wielder needs a tad more deliberation in execution than if he were playing *Sonic*.

Superfrog is very much a platformer in the classic mould. There are no real surprises in the gameplay (mind, I was a bit surprised the first time our hero became invisible apart from the eyes) although committed fans of the genre prefer scrupulously fair levels. Tricky yes, blind jumps and ridiculously tough enemies, no.

The basic idea is simple – you collect the requisite amount of gold coins to enable you to continue on to the next stage, you drink bottles of *Lucozade* to replenish your energy and grab whatever else you can too.

What *Superfrog* has going for it is that it doesn't attempt, nor does it pretend to be anything other than a simple platform game. Now this may sound like an obvious and stupid thing to say but so many games are so desperate to be different, so

desperate to please that they forget the reason for their very existence.

And as we know, three things are important in games; playability, playability and playability. *Superfrog*

adheres to these principles; the sprite himself is smooth and fluid of movement, the cartoon-style graphics are nicely drawn although the in-game music does tend to grate after a while.

Superfrog is, (along with *Krisalis'* *Arabian Nights*), the best platform game for the CD32 at under £15. In fact, it's better than many at £25. You may not gasp in astonishment at the slippy, slidey Ice World, nor will you think the Fun Park stage the most exciting moment of your life but you'll play this game. And you'll play it again, which is the most important point to take into consideration when you part with your cash.



in 1981, a pointy-nosed woman with warts had given him a poisonous drinks potion which had transformed him into something green and slimy. Then he could have lived on a lily pad at Camilla... I s'pose I'd better shut up now – I'm sure I could get hanged for such careless, idle chatter.

Superfrog was once a prince – a prince who actually bears a remarkable resemblance to Shaggy, from *Scooby Doo* fame. In a plot of positively fairytale proportions, Shaggy, instead of wearing a crown and silk pantaloons, now sports a red cape and huge flippers. Six levels of platform action (and a few sub-levels) stand in the way of *Superfrog*'s reconciliation with his lost princess.

And now it's over to the Inevitable Comparisons Department on the fourth floor. If *Superfrog* had been blue and



VERDICT

Gloriously simple, *Superfrog* is a classic example

Our superhero is about to take a trip up the Acme Big Sucking Thing. Whoooooooooaaaaa!!!!!!

Superfrog looks rather cool in the opening sequences but a bit softer in the actual game.



SUPERFROG'S PROGRESS



Chart your progress through the worlds. The boy frog is doing pretty good now.

EDIT 6

HOLD

00

START COLLECT

24 SCORE 15
50 40
20 10
HOLD 1000



POINTS 231

You've collected a pile of gold coins and if you're feeling lucky, you can gamble the lot away.

LEVEL CODE

EXTRA LIFE

50

30

10

LOSE

WIN

Superfrog looks surprised. Surely he must have realised that landing on spikes would be a pain in the backside?

Time it right and you can squash the wasps by jumping on them. Don't try it on the hedgehog though. You die.



of a truly playable platform game and **nicely priced too!**

85%

ARCADE POOL



PROGRAMMER : MARIO SAVOIA • PUBLISHER : TEAM 17 (0924) 201846 • PRICE : £14.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

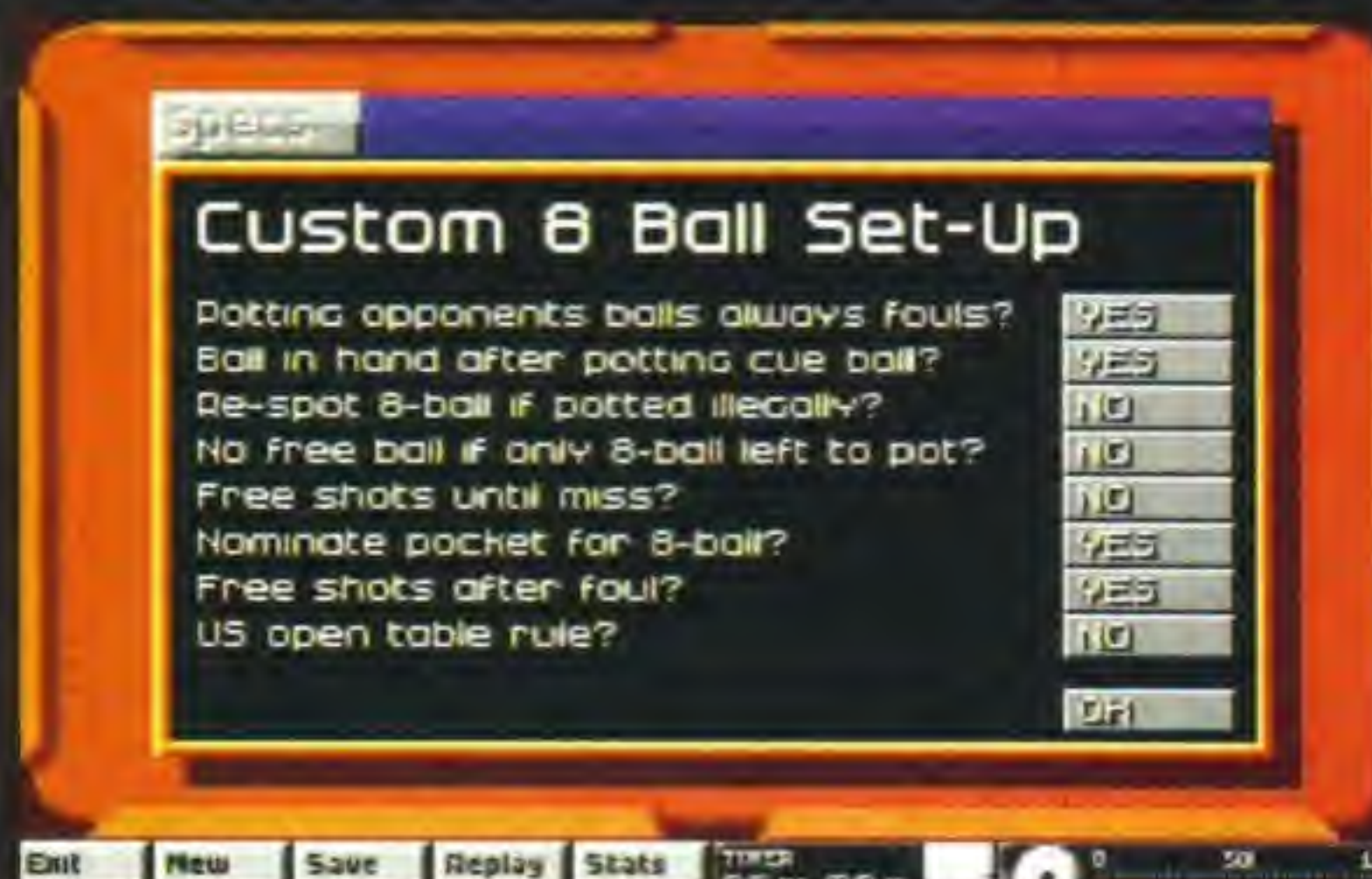
Right on cue, Steve Bradley dons his waistcoat and bow tie to discover whether *Arcade Pool* will go down in a baize of glory. Read on to find out if it snookers the opposition...



In the Trick Shot mode you use the white hand to pinpoint the positions of the balls. Now you can attempt the most ridiculous of shots – they never work either.



You can customise the player set-up to stick in all your favourite easy listening singers and film stars. Glenn Campbell, as you would expect, is a demon at eight-ball pool.



The custom set-up allows you to tailor the rules to your liking, though unfortunately the option to smash your opponent with the cue after a thrashing has not been included.

There are many people out there who are under the misapprehension that simulations of sports/pub games have to be REALISTIC, that they have to play just like the REAL THING. This is totally nonsensical. For a start, you are playing a computer game and looking at a TV or monitor. How can this possibly be realistic?

When *Arcade Pool* first appeared on the Amiga there were mutterings along the lines of: 'Ooh, it's not as realistic as *Archer Maclean's Pool* (a famous floppy Amiga game), and 'But some of those angles that they do in *Arcade Pool* just couldn't happen in real life'.

So bloody what? I personally don't want real life in a computer game. If I wanted real life I would get a pile of 20p pieces, a couple of mates and head off to the pub. Some people even said 'But I had that shot aimed up perfectly and it should definitely have gone in. There's something a bit wrong with this'. Yes, and when I'm playing pool down the pub I think that every shot that I've lined up is perfect too, but hey, I don't pot the ball every time. No-one ever does.

Arcade Pool is a game that is incredibly easy to play, only it's not very easy to play well and therein lies the secret of the game. You can pick up the joystick and whack the

balls around with no trouble at all, but it takes a fair amount of time to pick up the intricacies of the game.

Sure, you may be confused initially by the movement of the balls because they don't run exactly like the REAL THING. And, of course that was the main criticism with the game *Microcosm* – heck it just wasn't like the real thing.

The top-down view of the table in *Arcade Pool* means that you always know where the balls are positioned and using the full aiming tool enables you to pinpoint your shot. Those that think that the full aiming tool is for sissies can use the outline tool or simply shoot blind.

This game is almost weighed down with options – you don't really need to know about them all, but breathe in a second and blast through this lot: There are four baize colours; US and UK ball sets; two skill levels and three levels of table friction (they effect the speed of the ball). Not only that, there are eight types of game you can play and an option to customise the rules to your liking.

One particular game, Speed Pool, attracts an almost fanatical interest in some people, the aim being to pot nine balls in as short a time as possible. It is a game that can make even the most sober of



VERDICT

Arcade Pool is cheap, playable, easy to



The aiming tool allows you to get a reasonable feel for where both the object ball and the cue ball will end up, but with a bit of practice, Doris can dispense with it.

folk scream vicious obscenities at the screen. I won't trouble you with detailing my fastest time – you will no doubt only laugh uproariously and label me an incompetent buffoon.

You can vary both the pace you strike the white ball and alter the position you hit the ball, which enables you to produce stun, side and roll-on – the latter being particularly difficult.

Arcade Pool is, like many competitive games, best played in two-player mode. Mind, you can't beat an eight-man game of *Killer* where you lose a life every time you miss the ball.

Some of the computer opponents are particularly tough and it can be most disheartening to see your opponent rattle off four cushions before rifling in a couple of reds. But with a bit of practice, you learn that you too can bounce around the angles with aplomb.



There are some nice clacking sound effects in *Arcade Pool* – even the music (you can choose to turn it off), which rather closely resembles the theme to BBC2's *Pot Black*, is pleasant. And the programmer has taken time to produce an extremely simple and attractive front end. The options are clearly laid and you become au fait (as they say abroad somewhere) with them in minutes.

Arcade Pool is half the price of many CD32 games and as playable as most. Check it out, just don't tell me it isn't REALISTIC. I simply do not care.

"The top-down view of the table means you always know where the balls are positioned, and using the full aiming tool enables you to pinpoint your shot"

Speed Pool!



Nine balls to pot, how fast can you do it? Someone reckons they potted six off the break once and completed the lot in less than 20 seconds. Sounds like Jimmy Hill to me.



Patsy reckons you'd be crazy to play on any table other than brown; and a fetching baize it is too. Whether she can clip the blue into the centre pocket is another matter.



The red bar on the right enables you to determine the strength of shot – when breaking off it's best to give it plenty of welly. Now watch those balls scatter.



Arcade Pool never ceases to amaze. Just look at how the balls have ended up – as luck would have it, the yellow ball dropped. Oh, all right, it's the Trick Shot mode.

learn and most importantly fun.

90%

BATTLETOADS



PROGRAMMER : RARE • PUBLISHER : MINDSCAPE INTERNATIONAL

(0444) 246333 • PRICE : £29.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



Curiously enough, the manual doesn't explain how to execute this manoeuvre.



"Avoid *Battletoads* like you would someone with the Black Plague"



The object of this level is to find Noel Edmonds and kill him.



You feel like a rest from all the fighting you can always down and boogie.



Beware the flying toasters. They'll give you more than just a shock.

Steve McGill finds out that a crap game, as we all know, is a crap game. And *Battletoads* is a crap game.

In issue 36 of sister magazine *Amiga Power*, a letter in the form of a poem was published about the non-appearance of *Battletoads* on the Amiga. The following is an extract:

I saw an ad for *Battletoads*,
It said phone for your free demo,
So I left a message on their
answering machine,
And waited, but it did come? No!

A few months later I tried again,
And this time it was answered,
They said to stop phoning so
they could do some work,
The grumpy little b*****s!

They also said it was ready to go,
The end of all my troubles,
It turns out they were being
economical with the truth,
They deserve a kick in the laurels.

And still I want to play the game,
And still it hasn't come,
Oh please AMIGA P***R tell me,
Where the hell's my demo gone?

Anyway, aside from the unexplained ridiculously long wait, *Battletoads* is one of the most hateful games I've ever had the misfortune of having to review. Gameplay is absent, intelligent use of the CD32 controller is absent, use of the AGA graphics is absent, appeal of just about any kind is totally and utterly absent.

Let's discuss the main flaws of the game one at a time. We'll start with the control method.

Despite eight pages of colourful characterisation background on the toads themselves, the control method explanation is squeezed into seven lines on one page. Some of the information you need on later levels, such as the ability to barge into adversaries is ridiculously absent.

And this leads to the major criticism about the mechanics of actually activating the barge. On the A1200 version – absolutely identical to the CD32 version apart from the

control system – you induce the barge by doing the following – quickly tap the joystick twice in the direction you require and hit the fire button. How successful you are at doing this depends on the joystick you're using. With the CD32 you don't have the option of changing joysticks. You're restricted to the joypad.

It's very difficult with a joypad to perform this manoeuvre. The thumb isn't the quickest digit of your hand and the joypad isn't very responsive to fast, sharp movements anyway. It beggars belief that Mindscape didn't realise this. They should have opted to use one of the shoulder buttons instead. It would have made things much easier.

Unless you're some kind of nimble-fingered digitally dextrous wizard, you're not going to manage the move. And it's going to severely cramp your chances of making it to the second level.

I had to transfer to the A1200 game to make any further progress. I had to see if there was anything good waiting to be explored and conquered. But, alas, no. There wasn't.

There are 12 levels in all. I couldn't make it any further than the fourth. The only reason I persevered was because I'm being paid to write this review. Throughout the tortuous repetition of crap combat moves, I could only feel heartfelt sympathy for anyone unfortunate enough who had already parted with their hard-earned cash to buy *Battletoads*.

And another thing, the graphics are dire with no more than about 16 colours on screen. And the gameplay is horrendous. You should have concluded by now that it is impossibly difficult to play with a joypad.

The bottom line is simple. Avoid *Battletoads* the way you would avoid someone with Black Plague. If avoidance isn't enough, burn the CD. Destroy the ashes in a sub-atomic molecular particle destruction beam. The game is an insult to the CD32. Get it out of my sight.

VERDICT Being buried neck deep beside a red ant colony would be more fun than this.

17%

Brian The Lion In RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

PROGRAMMER: REFLECTIONS • PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS (051) 709 5755
PRICE: £19.99 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

Um, everything's right, and yet something's wrong. You know how it is. Well, you do if you've ever seen *Last Action Hero*. In theory, everything looks great – big stars, big budget, a director with a proven track record, loads of special effects – yep, this is what hit films are made of. Except it wasn't. It was a commercial turkey the size of which would keep Bernard Matthews popular with troops of cub scouts for a good few camping trips.

In theory, it worked. But, then, in theory bumble bees can't fly and Punt and Dennis aren't funny, and there's still the chance that the 'other two' from the Mary Whitehouse Experience could be attacked by a swarm of bees while making their next series (or is that just wishful thinking?).

And, in theory, *Brian The Lion* should work. It's certainly got the right ingredients for console-style platform games as described on page 14 of *How To Make Great Computer Games* (by Xavier Poy-Tation, Kwik/Kashin-In Press):

- One cute character, preferably with a gimmick.
- One vague plot (the vaguer the better in fact).
- One island setting.
- At least three different power-ups.
- Platforms, with at least two of the bouncy variety per level.
- Levels, which must include at least one underwater, one spooky, one mechanical and one with a mission (cloud hopping is always good for seasoning, as well).
- Villains, a huge variety, but all preferably totally mindless and who can be dispatched by bouncing on their heads.
- Crystals, to be collected.
- Bonus levels.
- 'Stunning' graphics (with at least one of the following so that you can boast about it on the cover artwork: 1) Over 150 different settings; 2) Over 100 frames of animation of the main sprite; c) Split level, retro-interactive, multi-propulsive, overscanned parallax scrolling (in one part of the later levels for a couple of seconds – cor, blimey, won't that be worth playing the rest the game to get to).

Well, yeah, *Brian's* got all of these. And it all looks very impressive. The graphics are mighty

fine. The animation is smooth. The levels are intelligently designed. The action can get pretty hectic. But the problem is that the game is just too formulaic – it's a platformer by numbers, like some also-ran contestant on a computer game special of *Stars In Their Eyes* – 'And Brain....' the inanely-haired and toothed Matthew Kelly would chortle, '...would just love to be Sonic.'

The lack of imagination is almost stifling. There isn't enough variety in the levels, either in terms of visual design or the challenges you have to tackle; the nasties are an uninspiring bunch (I mean, back-packing goats, I ask you); the power-ups are pretty tame (extra high jumps, a mighty roar, more speed, an increased chance of falling asleep – yawn); the mission levels are predictable and the bonus sections are more an annoying distraction than a chance to accrue lives.

Talking of the mission and bonus levels, these are new to the CD32 version of the game. The mission sections just about justify their existence (at least they break up the monotony of getting from left to right as quickly as possible), but the bonus levels are very mundane – a lame card game and a cup-and-ball-type thing. Plus you have to sit through the instructions for both of these each time you enter a bonus level, which is downright irritating.

The game plods. It never seems to develop, surprise or get into its swing. There are brief glimmers of hope; when you first enter the Labyrinth Of Death Brian leaps into a car. 'Great,' you think, 'A quick bit of rallying – this should be good.' But about 10 seconds later he leaps out of the car and it's back to plodding around platforms. What was the point (apart from some moderately amusing graphics)?

Brian The Lion tries. Jeez, it tries. Real hard. It's painful to watch sometimes as it goes through the motions, but just fails to make the grade because... well, because it's just so derivative. It doesn't do anything that hasn't been done a dozen times before. And it doesn't do any of them better. It does them all OK, but that's not enough. If it had been the first game of its type it would have been great. As it is, it seems dated already.



Don't feel blue... this cloud is just about to whisk you off on a shopping trip.

OK admit it... you wouldn't be able to resist a 'here's Brian bombing along' joke either...



Remember Clarence the cross-eyed lion from *Daktari*? – he was a pussy cat. Dave Golder finds out that Brian is too.

I think the Monopolies Commission should check out the prices this bloke charges.



"Brian The Lion tries. It tries real hard. It's painful to watch sometimes"

Brian tried to convince the committee, but whale-surfing isn't in the 1996 Olympics.



There are three bonus levels – including this cloud-hopping lark – which are all races against time... before you drop off.

VERDICT Visually and technically impressive, *Brian* lacks bite. It just doesn't get its claws in.

57%

LITIL DIVIL



PROGRAMMER : GREMLIN IRELAND • DISTRIBUTOR :
GREMLIN (0742) 753423 • PRICE : 29.99 •
RELEASED : OUT NOW

Eee pet, it looks gorgeous, but does *Litil Divil* deliver the goods? Steve Faragher's going underground...



This is what you'll be doing most of the time. Trudging. Down corridors.



Eek! Spiders!

Every time you begin the game you must fight this big, ugly ogre. It shouldn't take too long though before you've got him cowering submissively at your feet.



Have you ever been in the situation where it's really late at night, you're really hungry, and the only source of food is a pizza takeaway on the other side of town?

After hours of agonising about whether to walk all that way just to get some food, weighing up the pros and cons of trudging through lonely, dimly-lit streets (it's probably raining too), if you're anything like me, you'll come to the only sane conclusion. Pick up the phone, and get it delivered.

Now, you may well be asking, what has all this got to do with *Litil Divil*? Well, I'll tell you. That's the 'plot' of *Litil Divil*. Litil Divil's real name is apparently Mutt, and he's been sent out by his fellow demons to trudge through the lonely, dimly-lit underworld to get some pizza. And he's not smart enough to pick up the phone and order it.

Instead, you're forced to guide him through his travels – essentially five mazes dotted with the occasional puzzle room.

Litil Divil is beautifully animated by Adrian Walsh. The hero of the piece shows this talented animator's love of another devilish character from down-under, star of many a *Bugs Bunny* short – the Tasmanian Devil. The secret of Taz's charm you'll remember, is that he is both cute and explosive, capable of sudden activity that is mind-numbing in its ferocity. It is on exactly this contrast that the humour of *Litil Divil* is also based.

When Mutt Divil steps onto a pit his fall is exaggeratedly swift; when he walks too close to a cell window a fist flies out and strikes him sharply; and when he steps on a lightning conductor electricity arcs through his suddenly blue-glowing body and he is thrown comically into the air, with his arms outstretched.

This animation is wonderfully done, but it suffers the most ignominious death of humour – extended repetition. The first time you laugh, the second and third you chuckle. The fourth, fifth and sixth times will undoubtedly elicit a smile. But by the forty-third time that one of



Even devils need their beauty sleep you know.

your mistakes is followed by exactly the same comic action, you'll be starting to grimace.

The game suffers from too much trudging through mazes as well. Inside the box with the game is a small

pad of graph paper, designed for you to map each of the five levels; the sort of thing that's all right in a slow-moving strategy game such as *Eye Of The Beholder*, but bodes ill for what is supposedly an action game.

To alleviate the trudging drudgery there are occasional puzzle rooms. These are typically set-piece animations and you have to perform one crucial action to complete them. And the puzzles themselves are not very well thought out.

One, for example, has you fighting a sumo wrestler. For ages you battle to and fro, with Litil Divil sometimes punching the wrestler's head so hard that it disappears beneath his shoulder blades, but whatever you do you will always lose.

The solution is not at all obvious. You must go all the way back to the beginning of the level (trudge, trudge) and buy a pin from the shop (one of four items in the Level One shop, all with a purpose). Now the next time you fight the sumo wrestler the action will stop half-way through and, without any decision making on your part, Litil Divil will pull out the pin with a flourish and pop the sumo wrestler, who turns into a balloon and zooms around the room dispelling air in fine old *Looney Tunes* fashion. The animation's funny, but the puzzle logic sucks.

Even when the puzzles are more action-based there is a problem. The game suddenly switches from a first person viewpoint to an isometric one, and you have to use the diagonals on the joypad instead of Up, Down, Right and Left. This overly-forced perspective is unnecessarily hard and results in considerable frustration.

In all, *Litil Divil* is a beautiful-looking game that is spoilt by the lack of notable gameplay. I found it reminiscent of *Dragon's Lair* and not greatly improved. It must go down, alongside so many others, as a great idea that somebody ruined. Shame!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT



As you can see, *Litil Divil* is very funny. The first time. But to find out what the game's really like, try closing the magazine and opening it again at this page a hundred times... Still smiling?

VERDICT

This game is slick, professional and beautiful to look at. Unfortunately, **it's also crap.**

43%

SIMON THE SORCERER



PROGRAMMERS: SIMON WOODROFFE & MIKE WOODROFFE • DISTRIBUTOR: ADVENTURE SOFT (021) 352 0847 •
PRICE: £34.99 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

Right, lets think about *Simon The Sorcerer* and ask some questions. Do you laugh at lame, inconsequential, pedantically irritating jokes? Do you judge a book by its cover? Do you think the inclusion of hundreds of megabytes of speech on a CD could help improve a game?

Do you like to sweep a joystick-controlled cursor over beautiful cartoon-like backgrounds desperately trying to locate minuscule objects which may or may not prove useful? Do you like uncomfortable juxtapositions of fairy tales, legends and myth that make no sense? Do you like stupid questions at the introductory part of a review.

Answer yes to any one of these questions and you may just find that *Simon The Sorcerer* has something to offer you – in abundance. So, exceptionally poor joking aside, it should come as no surprise that *Simon* isn't the best adventure game in the world.

The one good thing that *Simon* illustrates is the potential that lies in having access to the massive storage offered by CDs. Speech is used at every opportunity for all of the action commands, every action that Simon implements, interaction with the inhabitants of the fairytale world and even the links between the different scenes. It's a good idea but one that should be tempered with some user-definable options such as the ability to interrupt or speed up the speech. The option to switch off the speech is also notable by its absence. If you're in a hurry or find that you have to repeat certain sections of the game, you'll appreciate that a speech toggle should have been included.

Simon also illustrates how not to go about addressing the potential in speech adventures. Take the actors' voices. Apart from Chris Barrie of *Red Dwarf* fame and Roger Blake (the voice behind many of the *Spitting Image* characters) the rest of the actors sound samey. Even when they're playing completely different characters. It spoils all of the fragile atmosphere that may have been built up before that point.

But that's not all that gets in the way

There's an old adage about wearing a joke thin. This sketch wears the joke anorexic.

of enjoying the game. As previously hinted at from the introduction, Simon tries too hard to be funny. He looks straight into the camera from time to time and cracks poor jokes. It draws attention to the fact that you're playing a game and detracts from any atmosphere the plot may have instilled in you.

Not that the plot is up to much either. Simon has to get home to the real world. And the only way he can manage to do that is by rescuing the Wizard Calypso. Cue a catalogue of improvised mythology, fantasy, and fairytales – *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, the Queen from *Sleeping Beauty*, numerous characters from the land of Narnia and the, by now, ubiquitous Tolkienised Middle Earth characters.

In order to free the Wizard Calypso, you've got to solve all manner of puzzles set you by the various denizens inhabiting the fairytale land. As hinted at in the intro, you've got to find all manner of objects and use them in the right situation. This part makes up most of the meat of the game. And it can be pretty tortuous.

The background graphics have to be scanned literally pixel by pixel before many of the objects you're looking for appear. Which means that you can never be too sure whether a screen has relinquished all of its secrets or not. This leads to a lot of unnecessary frustration and head scratching. Not a good thing.

Overall, *Simon The Sorcerer* isn't quite as bad as the picture painted here implies. The flaw in the game mechanics aren't minor. They spoiled the enjoyment of the game for this reviewer. If you're a big fan of adventure games, add on about 15 per cent to the final mark. You'll probably love *Simon*. Everyone else, check it out in the shop and play it for half an hour first. You'll know after that time if you want to play any more.

Steve McGill dons his wizard's flowing robes and pointy hat, but does he come under *Simon The Sorcerer's* spell?



Even when you're in fantasy land it's very difficult to escape the influence of high pressure Big Issue sellers.



'And today's story is going to be through the round window,' said Simon.

"*Simon The Sorcerer* isn't the best adventure game in the world"



If you're a Gandalf freak, you'll appreciate the loads of orcs you get to play with.



In this fantasy land, wearing a purple outfit with a stupid conical hat means that you can pretend to be over 18.

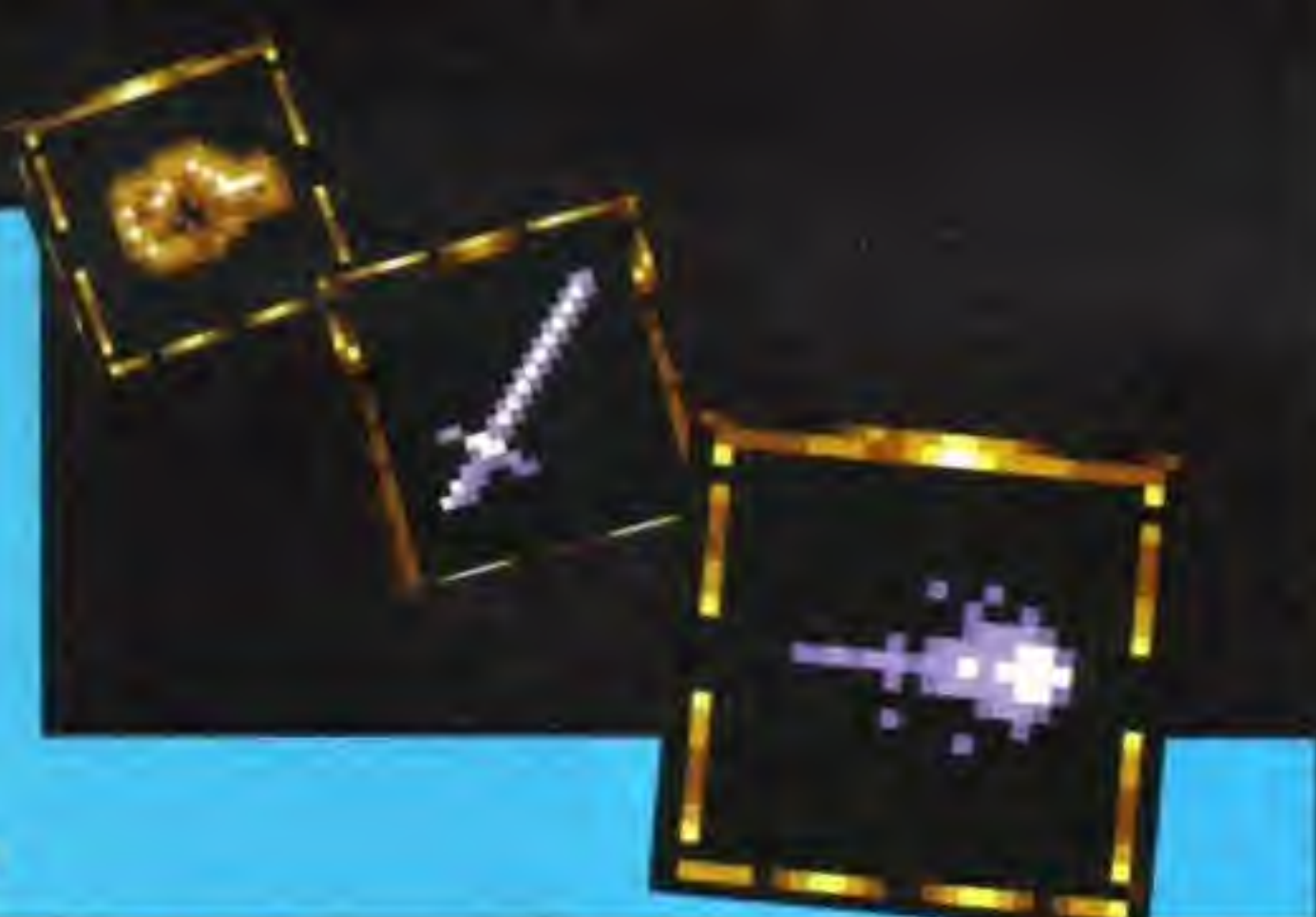
VERDICT A beautifully innovative approach to an adventure, spoiled by a below average plot.

67%

MYTH



PROGRAMMERS : DAVE COLCLOUGH & ROBIN LEVY • PUBLISHER :
SYSTEM 3 (081) 844 8212 • PRICE : £14.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW



Mythical figures need slaying. Steve Bradley responds to the advertisement and sets off with sword in hand.



'But don't you know who I am? I'm Wolf from *Gladiators* and all this fighting is supposed to be pretend stuff. But that blummin' well hurt.'



The life of a myth-slaying superhero is not all plain sailing. Some of the monsters are awful and the dressing rooms are an absolute disgrace.



'I have my sword. If only I had my shiny red costume and Ulrika. And it was all inside so you didn't get cold. That would be a lot better.'



Big points for killing big monsters. Now you can afford the purple rinse that you promised yourself.

In an age not remembered by men, the forces that governed all life met in a council to decide the fate of their respective creations. These beings are only known to us as the pagan ones and play no part in our lives today, but aeons ago no man was free of the attention of these malignant spirits. His life was governed and manipulated according to their whims and his death, usually prematurely, was but entertainment to them.'

What the bloody hell is that all about? It's the first paragraph from the manual and needless to say does little to explain the game that is *Myth*. Let me tell you about *Myth*. The main protagonist bears a remarkable resemblance to Wolf, the large fellow who fights foe every Saturday evening in the popular television show *Gladiators*, while the game itself is a rather cumbersome mixture of the platform and beat-em-up genres.

Wolf (if I may be so bold as to use that moniker from this juncture) travels bare chested, sports blue trousers and a rather fetching mane of blue hair. It is perhaps pertinent at this point to ask just what is the point? Well apparently, a naughty god has corrupted nice gods (Good God!) and the future of life as we know it is at risk and, cue fanfare, only Wolf from *Gladiators* can save us.

There are four main areas to traverse: Ancient Greece, a Norse and Celtic level and an Egyptian romp – these periods are split into three levels before leading you to, if you're good enough, a shoot-em-up showdown with evil Dameron.

Wolf's initial task (and indeed yours, if you choose to purchase this

piece of CD software) is to slash his way past skeletons, monsters and green dragon-type things that fly around in Hades in Ancient Greece. The sword-wielding skeletons shoot up through the floor and if you've seen *Jason And The Argonauts*, it may remind you of that, only without Jason and the ship. And the sea.

Unfortunately, Wolf isn't exactly Rudolph Nureyev when it comes to skipping around the platforms and you regularly get turned over early on, but after a bit of practice, and the realisation that you could be using a sword when you're trying to kick them to death, progression is inevitable.

Graphically, *Myth* is reasonably tasty – the larger monsters initiate the odd sharp intake of breath until you remember how brave Wolf is, so you puff out your chest and continue to smack the joystick. Yet the gameplay is so stiff, so lacking in fluidity, you never really get the feeling that you are on top of the job.

The Celtic forest differs from the first level in that there's no prancing around, you simply get stuck in, while dancing 'n' slashing is the order of the day against the Norse gods Thor and Odin.

The Egyptian level is set inside a pyramid which requires a little more subtlety and a tad more tactical nouse, but despite the variety, *Myth* falls down on playability. If only the sprite had been more manoeuvrable and a bit quicker *Myth* would have been heaps better. It's a shame because there are some tremendous sound effects – like the howl Wolf emits before dying a horrible death.

As a hack 'n' slash platformer, *Myth* falls well below the excellent *Second Samurai* which is due to make a CD32 outing shortly. But at £15 *Myth* is still reasonable value and for those with a penchant for hairy chaps from *Gladiators* and *Jason And The Argonauts*, and are prepared to die by the sword it may be worth a look. Damned frustrating though.



"Unfortunately, Wolf isn't exactly Nureyev when it comes to skipping around the platforms"

VERDICT

Not the greatest hack-n-slash platformer, but at only £15 *Myth* will find buyers.

60%

TURE

★ AMIGA ★
★ SUPER NINTENDO ★
★ GAMEBOY ★
★ GAMEGEAR ★
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EMERALD MINES



PUBLISHER: ALMATHERA (081) 687 0040 •
PRICE: £14.95 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

Richard Jones
digs deep into
the many levels
of *Emerald Mines*,
but does he
strike... er gold?



Avoid the flying stingy things and collect the green sparklers if you want to feel the wonderful warm glow of success.



"There are oodles
of levels, but
remember – size
isn't everything"



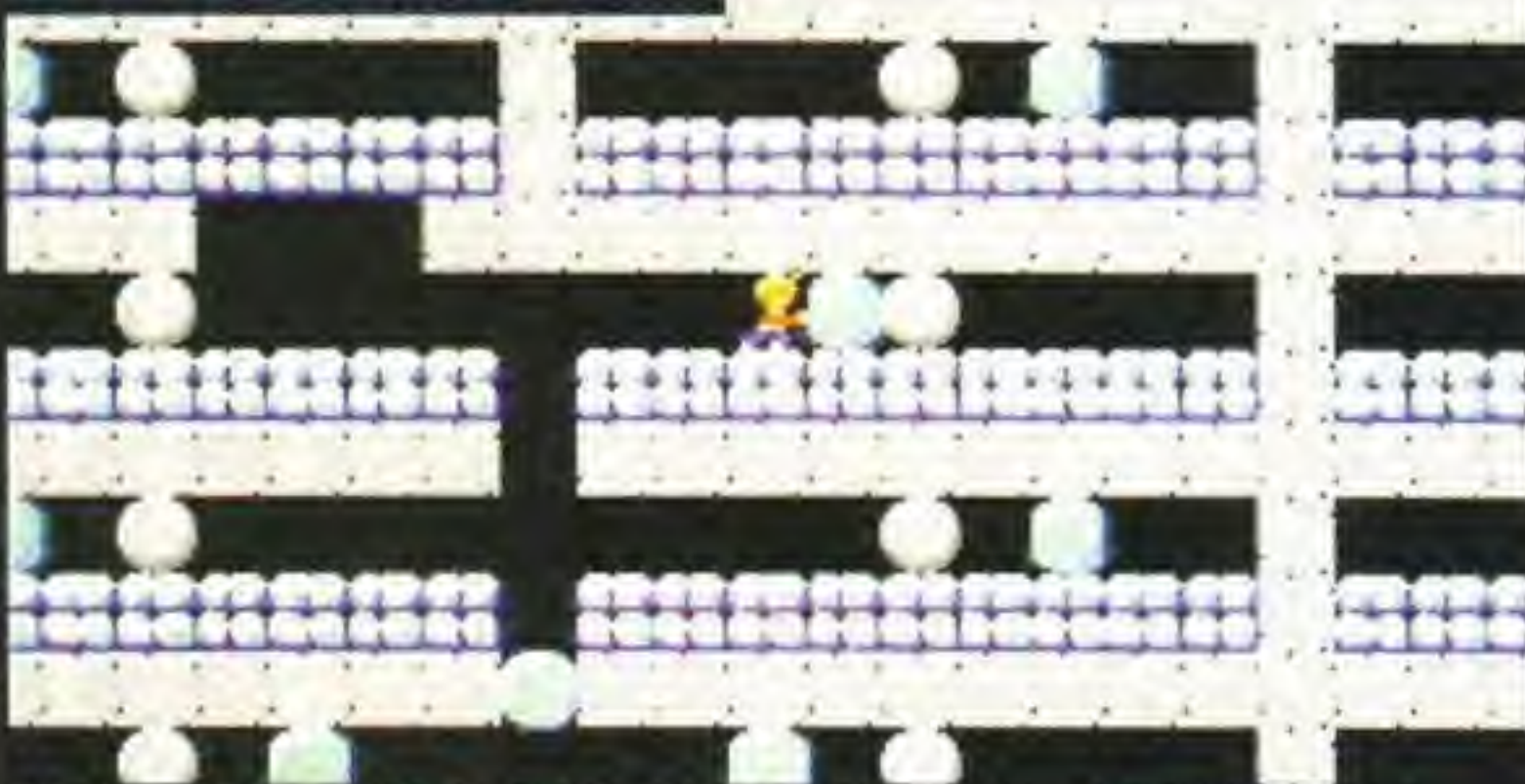
It's when you are being pursued by a swarm of killer wasps that you begin to realise the CD32 controller is crap.

Another puzzle poser. By the time
you've worked out what to do it will
be time for tea. Or *Match Of The Day*.



Three seconds
left, loads of
emeralds to
collect and the
exit is on the
other side of
the screen.
Hmmm, doesn't
look too good.

A baffling one this. You have to push the
boulders but why and where are the two
words that immediately spring to mind.



TIME: 159 SCORE: 000 EMERALDS: 042 ALMATHERA 1994

The great thing about CD is the
storage space. There's oodles
and oodles of room for sumptuous
graphics, superb animations, and
sizzling soundtracks – or you can
cram zillions of levels of crap
graphics and sound on to the disc.
Emerald Mines definitely goes for the
latter approach.

There are more than 10,000
levels of *Emerald Mines* and if you
started playing them now and did
nothing else for the rest of your life
(except have your tea and go to the
toilet. And watch *Match Of The Day*
every Saturday) you would be very,
very old and extremely confused by
the time you finished.

Of course if you are already very
old you'd probably die before you
finished, although you could buy
yourself more playing time if you
skipped tea, didn't watch *Match Of
The Day* every Saturday and didn't
go to the toilet (much).

Yes, there is an awful lot of
Emerald Mines and because it only
costs £14.95, you get more levels per
penny than with any other CD32
game. However, you presumably
bought your CD32 to play whizzy,
shiny and totally fab new games, not

old puzzle affairs with a distinctly PD-
ish feel to them.

Emerald Mines (which is basically
the C64 game *Boulderdash*) is not all
bad, the puzzles are fiendishly tricky
and even after you've worked out
what to do, it's another thing
altogether actually achieving it in the
allotted time or without getting
squashed by something bigger and
nastier than you.

You are a little chap (or indeed
you can choose to be various other
spritely characters) whose only aim in
life is to collect emeralds and
diamonds. Once you've cleared a
level, leg it to the exit as fast as you
possibly can and progress to your
next test of your skill – and patience.

Thankfully, you can choose
where you start from so you don't
have to complete Level One before
you get to see the rest of the game.
This means you can find a level you
like and concentrate on it rather than
battle your way stoically through
something tedious.

Some of the puzzles are
completely baffling – by the time
you've worked out what to do it's time
for your tea, or *Match Of The Day*, or
you want to go to the toilet. But some
are heaps of fun and ridiculously
frustrating, especially the one where
you get chased by a psychopathic
swarm of wasps.

You could probably find
something just as good as *Emerald
Mines* in any half-decent Public
Domain library, but for £15 you get
the CD equivalent of about 100 floppy
disks worth of puzzles – some good,
some bad, and many indifferent.

Oh, it's worth pointing out that if
you use the CD32 controller to play
Emerald Mines you will probably want
to kill or maim something before the
day is out.



Here your character has magically been
transformed into a blonde girlie. There are loads
of other character options. Great!

VERDICT

This PD-style puzzler is certainly big. But it
ain't too clever.

57%



Your little chum is supposed to help, but he spends most of the time dawdling along behind you complaining about the cold.

Platform games – what can you say? You're in charge of a small character or two, and you leap your way through loads of levels on the pretext of following an irrelevant plot – which usually involves freeing an unfortunate collection of sprites which have been captured and are being held against their will.

You avoid, shoot, squash or otherwise dispose of bad things and collect good things. Occasionally you stumble on a hidden level or happen upon some sort of puzzle. You've played platform games before, you know what they're like.

But some platform games are markedly better than others, and if there's one name synonymous with a good platform game it's that of Andy Braybrook of *Rainbow Islands* and *Fire And Ice* fame.

Fire And Ice was first released in the Summer of 1992 and this CD32 version is basically the same game. The soundtrack has been tweaked in a plinky plonky sort of way that gives no hint that Braybrook's favourite band is Rush, and there are a few new, fancy graphics on some of the later levels. But there are no radical changes, and why should there be? The original gameplay is excellent – it ain't broke, so there's no point fixing it.

The hero of the piece is one Cool Coyote, whose aim is to journey across the globe avoiding, shooting and jumping on things and collecting bits of key to unlock the door to the next level. To help him in this task, he's got a little chum who tags along behind him and occasionally helps out in the baddy battering.



Actually, the little fella is a bit like your kid brother. Remember in the school holidays when you wanted to go out with your mates, but your parents said you had to take your little brother with you... and look after him? Cool Coyote's diminutive friend lags behind, gets lost, gets in the way and can be a huge annoyance. If only you could give him a fiver and tell him to get lost.

Fire And Ice looks fantastic, the levels – Arctic, Underwater, Scotland and Rain Forest – are fabulously drawn. The gameplay is a tad pedestrian, but what this game lacks in speed, it makes up for in subtlety. Neat touches abound – most obviously that you have to freeze the baddies by shooting them (you fire and ice them), rather than just take them out with an array of heavy arms.

But the most impressive feature of *Fire And Ice* is the gameplay. From a gentle start it grows in depth and difficulty, keeping you hooked and luring you back for just one more go.

After a couple of excursions you'll sail through the first few Arctic levels, taking out penguins, walruses, Eskimos and other denizens of the frozen wastes with disdain. But when you reach the Rain Forest level it all turns into total chaos as you battle to avoid little blokes blowing poisoned

darts at you, coyote-eating plants, giant centipedes, killer parrots and all manner of other fiendish forest foe.

If you're after a *Zoo*-style fast, furious and frantic platform romp, you'll probably find *Fire And Ice* a little on the slow side. But if you want a platform game of depth, imagination and subtlety, look no further.

FIRE & ICE



PROGRAMMER : ANDY BRAYBROOK •
DISTRIBUTOR : RENEGADE (071) 481 9214 •
PRICE : £5.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

Is *Fire And Ice* one of the hottest platform games for the CD32 or did it leave us cold? Ask Richard Jones...

Leap on to a passing bubble to go up in the world and then hitch a ride on a turtle. If the shell suits – wear it.



Here you are deep below the glens in the Scotland level, where you're set upon by giant spiders and other not so wee beasties.



As ends go being squashed by a giant walrus is a particularly undignified one.



"The most impressive feature of *Fire And Ice* is the gameplay"

Small chaps with poisoned darts and flaming spears, coyote-eating plants and giant centipedes abound in the Rain Forest.



VERDICT A subtle platform outing of depth and a deceptively devious difficulty level.

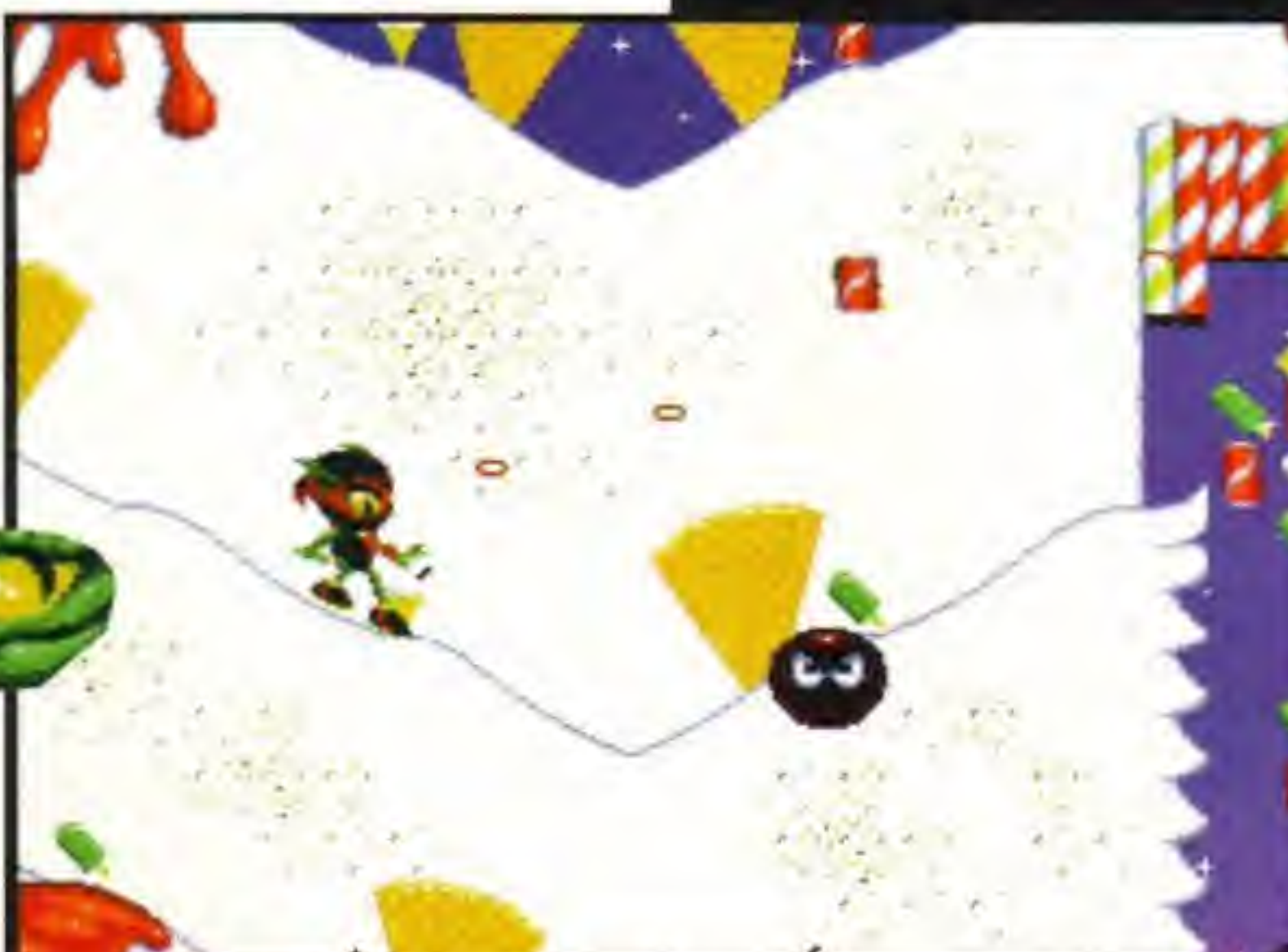
79%

ZOOL 2



PROGRAMMER : THE WARP FACTORY • DISTRIBUTOR : GREMLIN (0742) 753423 • PRICE : £30.00 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

First there was Jonathan Nash. And then there was another one. Of him. No, not Jonathan Nash, Zool. Blast.



Slide, Zool. Slide like honey spooned down a snake's damp throat.



Grimace, Mental Block. Grimace like a champion whose severity of expression is remarked upon.



Pass pillars, Zooz. Pass pillars like someone playing *Pass The Parcel* with architecture.



characters to land safely on small ledges. (Why do programmers insist that honing the gameplay through ingenious level design and imaginative set pieces isn't enough, and that they're somehow obliged to mess around with the mechanics?)

And the extra world – the Paper Plains – which you get right at the start of the game, and which is crushingly dull. And the criminal way the monsters regenerate if you go back through the level. And the comical music featuring exactly the

same cartoon samples that every other game with comical music uses and which annoy me indescribably, but you probably couldn't care a row of buttons about that. And the lack of passwords or continues, so you stagger through the first world every single time when all you want to do is to get back to that level with the pipes; or the snake-riding set piece; or the hopping-the-columns-sinking-into-lava sequence; or whatever.

KAPWINGGG

Yup, atypically, the levels in *Zool 2* have a bit of imagination behind them. No forests, no futurey steel cities, no slippery-slidey ice worlds with friction-free platforms. Instead, you get silly things like giant snakes and ladders boards, booby-trapped pyramids and a slippery-slidey ice world that's just one huge ridiculously fast ski-run, with you zipping along frighteningly uncontrollably, trying in a few picoseconds to decide which branch of the path to take.

The aim of it all is the same as usual: collect enough objects on a level to open the exit door. Attractively there are far more objects around than you need, so you can rush past the tricky bits and then stock up in a luxuriously quiet corner.

Gremlin get shirty if you call Zool an ant. Very shirty, in fact. So shirty that they went to the trouble of placing an advertisement which showed Zool holding an ant and looking smugly quizzical. 'Here is an ant,' Zool appeared to be saying. 'It does not look like me. Ergo, I am not an ant.' Mmm. Well, Sonic doesn't look like a hedgehog, and Mario, come to that, doesn't look like a plumber. So Zool's an ant. And that is that.

Zooz is also an ant, but a female one, and she's the gimmick of *Zool 2*. You can either play Zool (who can jump through ceilings) or Zooz (who can drop through floors) or – in two-player mode, natch – both. But not at the same time: in a bizarre regressive step, the players alternate when one loses a life. It's an extraordinarily foolish flaw, especially when you consider that *Zool 2* is otherwise beautifully flashy and playable. Well, except for a couple of cloddishly stupid flaws.

The pointlessly inertia-tweaked controls, for example, which make it almost impossible to get the

VERDICT A game that efficiently agitates fiercely



The tediously perennial jumping-on-heads attack can be happily ignored thanks to the characters' laser pistols, and the super use of the joypad (no Up to jump here, folks) means you can at last exploit the springy backflips and lurking crawls the designers demanded of you in the Amiga version without getting hopelessly confused. Hurrah!

Gremlin have been pushing Zool and Zooz as top game characters, but they're not. Unlike, say, *Out To Lunch*, where the pawky characterisations added to the game, you could replace the ant couple without noticing the difference. It is, bearded chin-strokingly predictably, but brighteningly wisely, the gameplay that makes *Zool 2*.

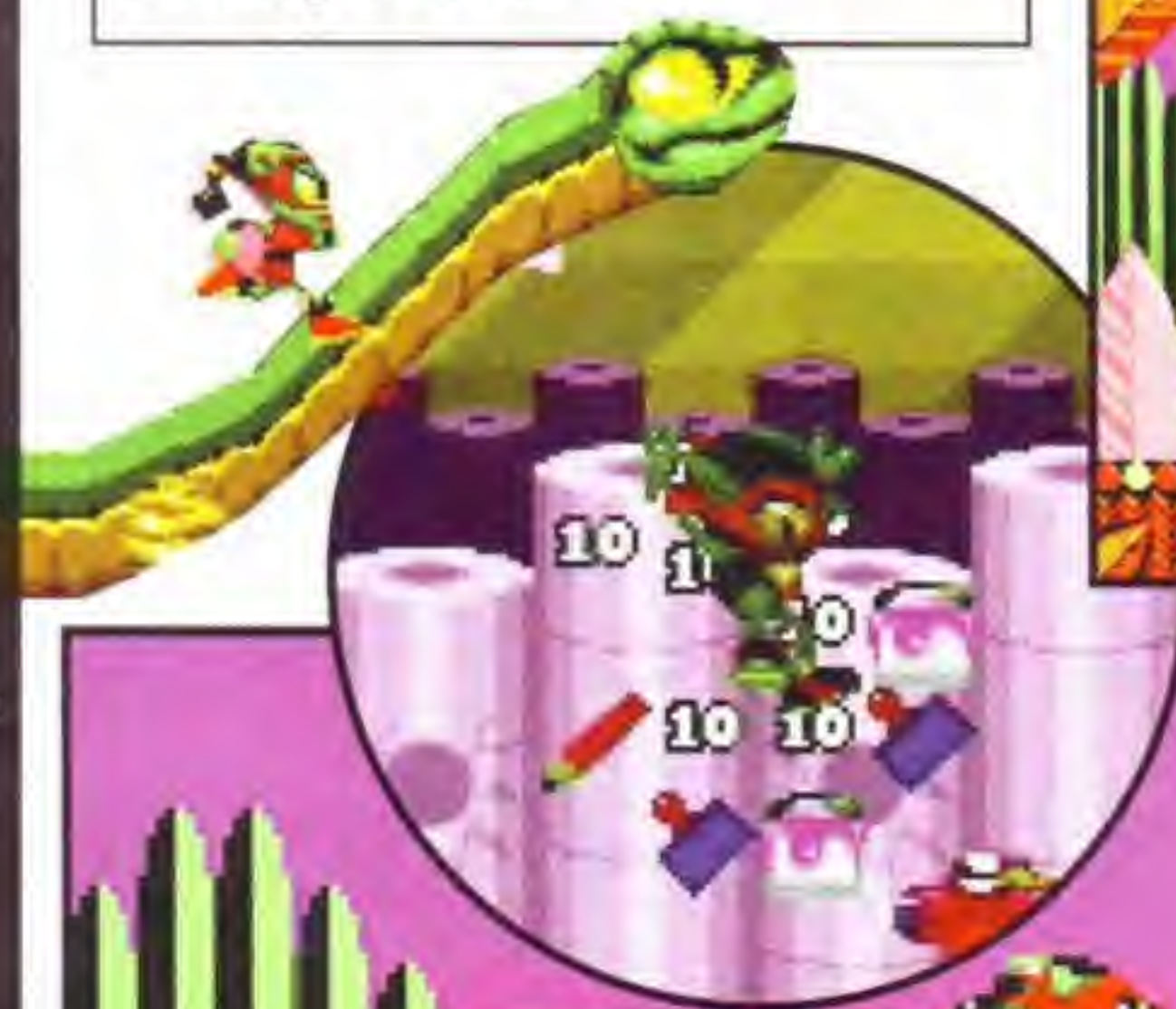
I've played loads of platform games, me. Enough to form a healthy contempt for the sloppy majority; the way you know what's coming next, and that it's not going to be very well done. This one puts the surprise back in platformers, and is squeakily polished. Cloddishly flawed it may be (though I have to admit that the skidding when you land adds outrageously unhelpful excitement), but I enjoyed *Zool 2* very much.



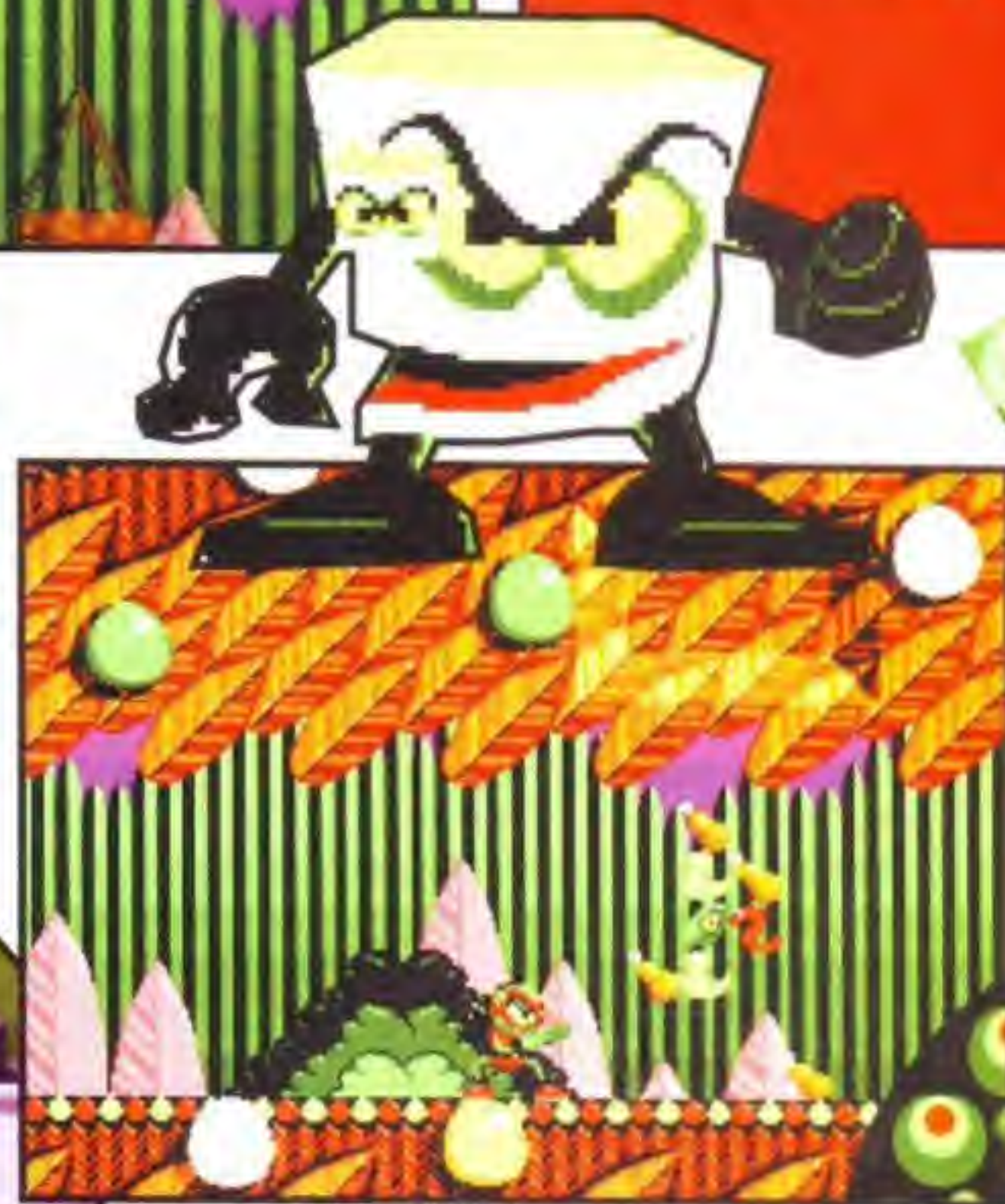
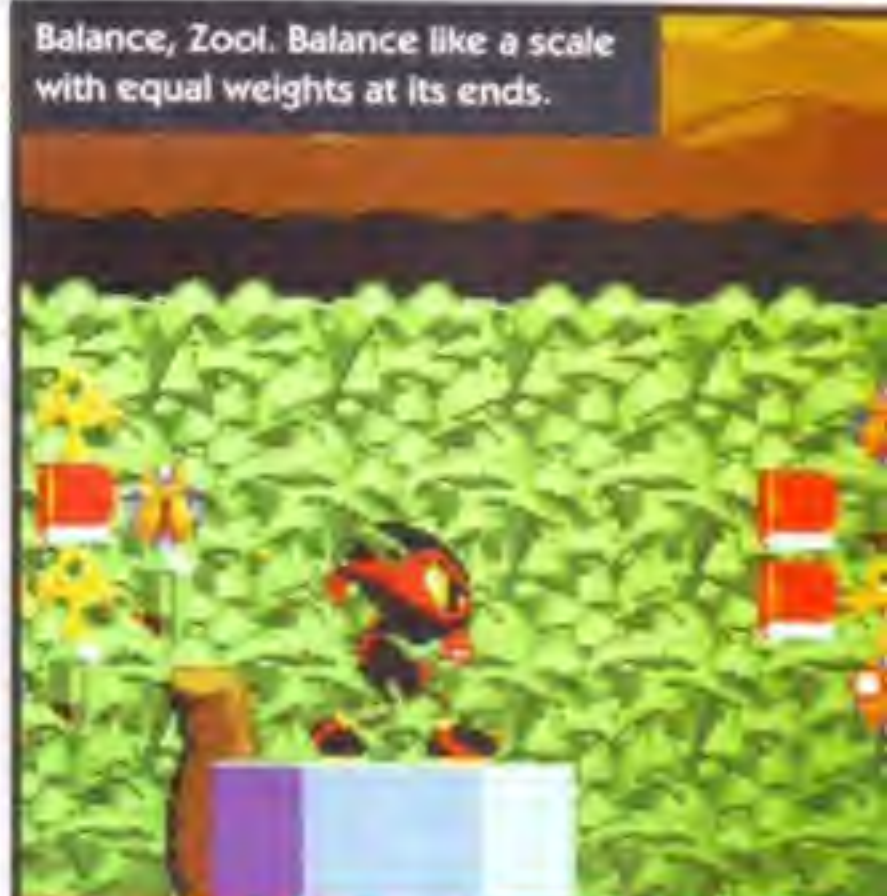
Spin, Zool. Spin like a stick in the hands of a stick spinner.



"You can at last exploit the springy backflips and lurking crawls"



Balance, Zool. Balance like a scale with equal weights at its ends.



Encroach, Zooz. Encroach like someone called Croach with the initial N but as a verb.

the diaphragm of a genre choking on the heavy pudding of overkill.

84%

ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS



PROGRAMMERS: JUNIOR MCMILLAN & DANIEL I BURKE
PUBLISHER: TEAM 17 (0924) 385903 • RELEASED: OUT NOW

Team 17's latest rumbler includes an unprecedented 22 fighters. But does that make it tough enough to go the distance? Tony Mott dons his gloves to find out...

As a game style, the humble beat-em-up is subject to more flak than old Turnip Taylor came by in his heyday. I'm not talking about the typical tabloid press knee-jerk, anti-violence reactionary pieces which, amusingly, run mere pages prior to their video game sections.

No – I'm talking about their perceived shallowness; the school of thought which puts beat-em-ups alongside mammoth 3D extravaganzas and snootily declares that they are worthless, superficial tat. It isn't a fair judgment.

To create a game as supremely playable and, well, just downright clever in design as the *Street Fighter II* series, you really need to inject it with something very special. It's the testing point of a beat-em-up and it manifests as its feel. If you get it wrong you may as well give up at the outset.

And that's why the wave of pleasantness which crashed over me when I got to grips with *Ultimate Body Blows* was such a surprise: I wasn't expecting such an obviously play-tested to the max product. It's difficult to define the actual elements which go to make up feel but I believe it falls under four main areas.

The first is control method. The game must be designed so that extended play breeds familiarity to the degree whereby you pull off moves by instinct alone. *UBB* scores here; the controls are smooth and fairly intuitive, plus, of course, there are the advantages offered by the CD32 pad over a single-button stick.

The second consideration is character weighting. If that sumo

wrestler looks to weigh 30 stone on-screen it's no good if he floats around like a yuletide treetop decoration.

Refreshingly, the fighters move with convincing inertia and avoid the annoyingly common weightless syndrome. Related to that point is solidity of hits. When you connect a blow on your opponent's chin you want to see him reel and hear a satisfying crunch. The game hasn't gone overboard here; personally I'd like to have had it cranked up a few notches, but there's never any doubt when hits land and a fair modicum of satisfying 'URGH!'s and 'HNNG!'s fly about when things get busy.

And finally, speed is crucial. *Body Blows Galactic* was a trifle pedestrian, but *UBB* more than compensates with three speed settings, the maximum of which offers a genuine adrenaline-and-sweat sundae which you'd be hard pressed to match elsewhere.

There's still room for improvement, though. While the backdrops are among the most attractive I've seen, they still don't quite have the charm or character of *SFII*. The all-new speech is a real mixed-bag, too; some characters' victory cries being clear and amusing, others scratchy and bordering on offensive.

Ultimately, as an arcade-derived game genre, beat-em-ups should endeavour to aspire – conform even – to arcade standards. Which in the case of *UBB* means chunkier and longer energy bars making them easier to read in the heat of action; special moves which require skilled joystick movements to pull off rather than the overly simple ones on display here; and a unique location – their home turf, if you like – with a matching musical score for each character.

I'm still not convinced that the definitive CD32 beat-em-up exists but until it comes along – and I'm convinced that Team 17 could well be the guys to do it – *Ultimate Body Blows* will do nicely thank you.

I ask you, is this the behaviour of responsible adults? Someone should tell them.



"A genuine adrenaline-and-sweat sundae which you'd be hard pressed to match elsewhere"

Here's 22 fighters for you to choose from. 22! You won't get that many at your local arcade.



VERDICT

Team 17 have finally delivered what their earlier efforts promised.



I seem to remember Ralph Machio doing something like this in *The Karate Kid*. The fool.



"Beat-em-ups should endeavour to aspire – conform even – to arcade standards"



See what I mean about the backdrops? They are lovelier than a dollop of concentrated niceness.



I believe we may have found a victor. But there's no need for all that posing stuff.

NAME: DRAGON
OCCUPATION: JURASSO
ORIGIN:

SPECIAL MOVES:

Crusher

Super Kick

SUPER MOVE:

Dambuster

Full details are available on every fighter. That Dambuster looks suspect though, don't you think?



Shirt and tie versus mask and very sharp sword. A somewhat foregone conclusion methinks.

These guys must get through some slacks. Moves like this are very Farah-threatening.



A few minor quibbles are apparent but this is generally **excellent stuff.**

83%

PREMIERE

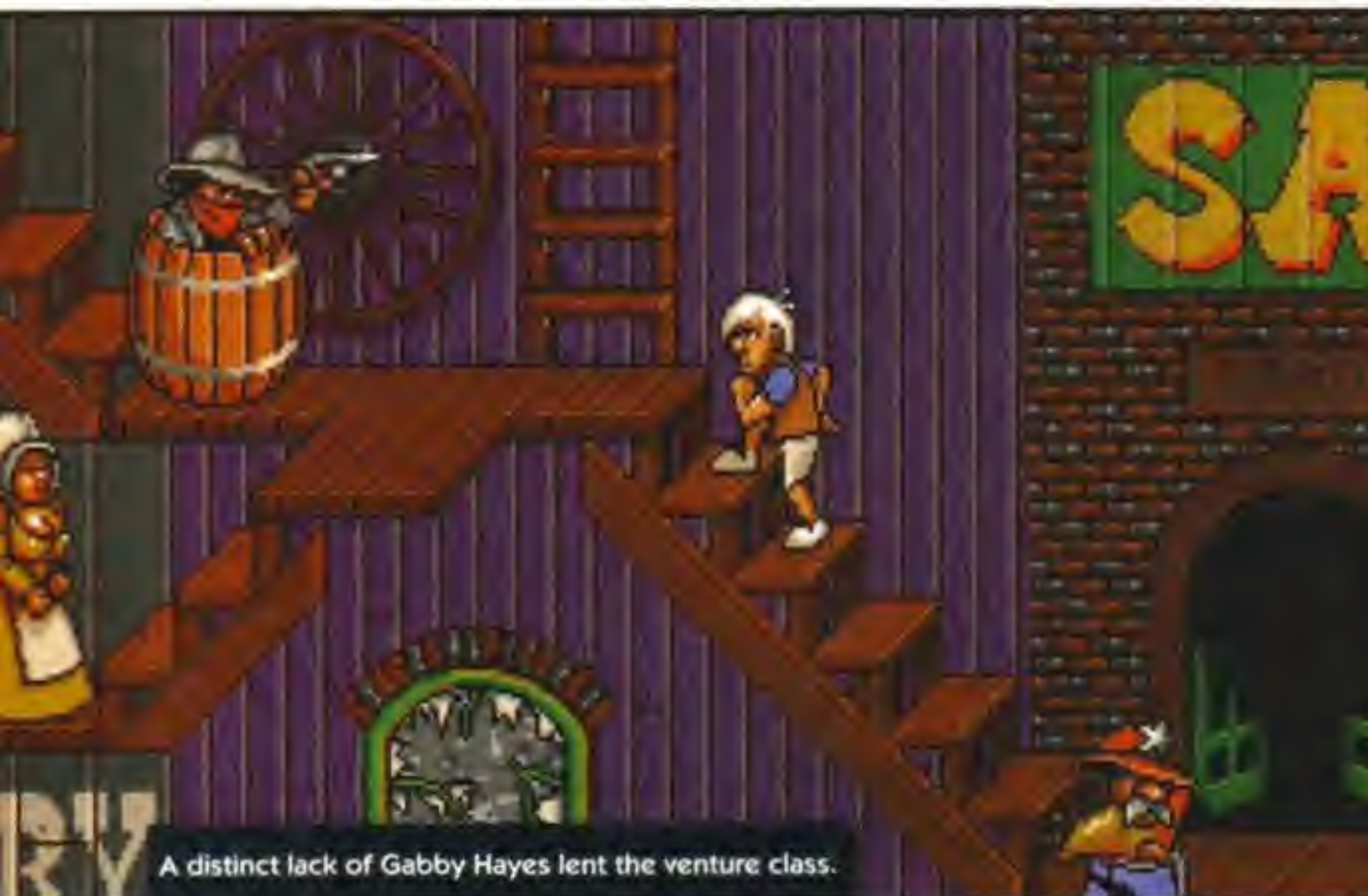


PROGRAMMER: 8TH DAY • DISTRIBUTOR: CORE DESIGN (0332) 297797 • PRICE: £15 • RELEASED: OUT NOW



Instructed to wait until he saw the whites of his opponent's eyes, Bernard tragically fell victim to Terrible Bill's clever hat ploy.

Jonathan Nash knows more about films than any other person alive – except for six he can name and several others.



A distinct lack of Gabby Hayes lent the venture class.



Black and white, because the films were black and white. You see? Gosh, it's fiendish.



"The complete disregard for the player collapsed one of my lungs (the left one)"



"Special dances shall not save you, Kid."



The small buffalo proved to be Happy William's undoing.

Ah, how time flies. Why, it seems nary a moment ago that platform games were in their infancy, plagued by horrific control problems and pointlessly frustrating tricks programmers played chortling on hapless gamers. Now, happily, the platform game has come of age. It works with you to ensure top gameplay fun (unless, of course, you don't happen to like platform games and see them as the diseased spawn of Lucifer's satanic consort). But – hist! – what is this? It is *Premiere*, come to take us back through time to those thrilling days of yesteryear as the Lone Ranger rides again.

KINEMATOGRAPH

A question, dear readers. Bearing in mind there are six buttons on the CD32 controller, what do you think *Premiere* uses in order to jump? Exactly right – Up on the directional pad. Houpla. It also features booby-trapped levers, unexpectedly multiple-hit monsters, hidden traps and the ability to fall off the screen. But more of that later.

Premiere has a charming background story – you're a film editor, and the film's been stolen, and you have to rampage through the sets of various pictures tracing the path of the errant cinephile. Cue lots of neat cinematic in-jokes, with buffalo stampedes on the Western

level, monochrome graphics in the silent picture, phaser guns in the SF movie and the like. It's a great idea, and beautifully implemented

with first-class animation, some tremendous music and a sound grasp of film clichés – when you reach the boss on the Western level, for example, you have to wait for him to draw before you can shoot.

Alas, *Premiere* is a game where the faults far outweigh the attractions. The game design is simply horrid, and you're almost certainly going to throw the CD in a drawer in explosive frustration before you get to see even half of the levels. The levels are crippling linear – you don't feel that you're in charge, but that you're being led by the nose through an exact sequence of events with no deviation.

There aren't even alternative routes through the screens. This leads to the old placed-monster ploy – you come out of a door and there's a monster waiting for you, giving you microseconds to react.

Premiere's not a game about the fun of exploration, but about the irritation of guesswork. Will this exit be clear? Will this lever that looks exactly the same as every other lever drop an undodgeable spike on your head? Will this wall decoration – again, identical to all the others – suddenly come to life and attack you? Will this seagull – predictably similar to the innocuous ones flying overhead – unexpectedly dive-bomb you? The list goes on, but that's only the half of it.

In an attempt to beef up the walk-along-and-blast-things gameplay, the programmers have made the screen two layers deep, so you can hop in and out to get past tricky opponents or collect the important power-up. But the acute perspective does this feature no favours, especially when coupled with the monsters' bizarre ability to shoot at you before they come on screen. And then, of course, there's Up to jump.

Premiere is a peculiar throwback to the harsh memory-tests of the earliest platform games, despite the original being only two years old. I tried so very hard with it, I really did, but in the end the complete disregard for the player collapsed one of my lungs (the left one) and I died in the crash room of the local hospital. Or switched off the game testily and went along to the cinema instead. I forget which.



VERDICT Top-hole graphics, lovely cinematic levels and criminally outdated gameplay.

44%

HEIMDALL 2

Mythology is always a safe scenario to build on when planning a 3D isometric adventure. That's exactly what Core have done with *Heimdall 2*. No prizes for guessing that the mythology's Norse. It bears as much relation to the original Viking tales as *Clash Of The Titans* did to Greek mythology.

The only real resemblance is the enmity that exists between Loki (the youthful bad boy of the pantheon) and Heimdall (the brave stalwart guardian of the Rainbow bridge whom Loki always mocked as an anorak). As with the original *Heimdall*, Loki is up to no good – setting villages and towns against each other, burning the crops, leaving the top off of the milk and not going to school when he's told.

To stop Loki from becoming overlord of all he surveys, Heimdall has to resume mortal form, reunite the warring villages and locate five pieces of Ro'Geld which, once pieced together, will hold Loki in frozen immobile stasis and thus ensure the safety of the worlds forever.

The game begins with Heimdall located in the Hall Of The Worlds. There are several portals which open and give Heimdall access to – predictably enough – the other worlds.

Each world has to be explored thoroughly. Heimdall has to interact with the local populous in the correct manner. He can use his neutrality to carry peace bringing messages to kings at war. They hand out clues and gifts that help in the overall quest. Each world contains a Ro'Geld and a talisman. Talismans help you gain access to other worlds. Ro'Gelds are vital to the completion of the game.

At first, being restricted to one world until you find a talisman may seem limiting. But it's a handy containing device. It means that you don't engage in too much useless meandering. The puzzles are mostly logical – some veer toward being esoteric – but take time and lots of travelling around to work out.

There's too much simplistic take a letter, gift or object from location A to location B. For example, your first task in Midgard is easy: Talk to a King called Rurik. After he talks to you, take a circlet to a King called Eadric who will give you a letter to take to Rurik. Rurik, upon receiving the letter from Eadric, will then give you a pass to the castle which eventually leads to the first of the precious Ro'Gelds.

Before you think that I'm giving too much away, don't worry. There

are plenty of other tasks to be completed before you can finish this world. Many are of the fetch and carry variety, so be warned.

Hopefully, the example given above will illustrate to you the potential for tedium in this game. Especially if you're not a veteran of the genre. A lot of game time is taken up with completely unproductive traipsing around. To help relieve the potential for tedium, the graphics positively burst with colour and almost resemble a 1950's cartoon in terms of background and detail. The world is lovely to explore. Every screen is worth detailed study in its own right.

But the graphics aren't good enough to keep you entertained forever. And when their novelty wears off, *Heimdall 2* quickly reveals its weakness. Its slow pace means that there isn't always enough happening to entertain you. Rather it becomes a frustrating search and testing of strategies wherever you go; saving regularly in case you get killed.

On the other hand, if you're a seasoned adventurer, the pace should feel just about right. You'll find that the constant message carrying irks you. Apart from that the rest of the game is nicely balanced. Monsters can be defeated if spells are prepared in advance. Puzzles can be worked out if attention is paid to scenario detail.

The control, object carrying and spell casting system is easily mastered and quickly becomes intuitive. So no problems to hinder the player or induce criticism there.

In conclusion *Heimdall 2* just about makes it to the buyer's post. In terms of originality, there are a million games similar in structure and plotline. But not too many of them are on the CD32. Playability is competent, verging on polished. There's even entertainment to be found sneaked away in largish corners of the game world. Certainly enough to make *Heimdall 2* seem worth purchasing.

Bear in mind though that the game costs £34.99. That may seem like rather a lot when you find yourself throwing the control pad down in frustration after fruitlessly visiting the Giant's HQ for the umpteenth time.



PROGRAMMER : THE 8TH DAY •
PUBLISHER: CORE DESIGN (0332) 297797
• PRICE : 34.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

Vikings were known
for their ferocity.
Steve McGill
discovers why they
would be ashamed
of this Heimdall.



Listening to everything that's said to him helps Heimdall in his quest.



Even the most innocuous of rooms can reveal essential items.



Sometimes Madge could only handle three bottles of pop before she got out of her chair.



Restrictions on council spending meant that litter was strewn around everywhere you looked.



Some puzzles such as this one are immediately obvious. So, shame on you if you can't do it.



Heimdall can only enter worlds he has talismans for.



No wonder he's the last of his kind. Cloaked cows were unfashionable in prehistoric times.

VERDICT A polished RPG packed with an acceptable balance of puzzles and arcade skills.

79%

GUNSHIP

PROGRAMMER : BOB KOON & ADRIAN SCOTNEY • DISTRIBUTOR : MICROPROSE (0454) 326532 • PRICE : £29.99 • RELEASED

Flying his £40 million AH-47M Apache helicopter gunship with one hand, and casually peeling a banana with the other, Jonathan Davies... Oh no! Aaargh!



Squint, and this could almost be a pair of helicopters at sunset.



Lieutenant Commander Forbes had suffered from terrible acne since his teens.



"I've brought in a dead bird I found on the way to school. It's been run over."



Damn. And I only left it here for five minutes.



"A couple of ZSU-23(4) Shilka Self-Propelled AA Guns swivelling in your direction..."

Gosh this game's hard. Within seconds of entering enemy airspace you'll have six SA-6 surface-to-air missiles locked onto you, three Mi-8 Hip helicopter gunships closing in for the kill, a couple of ZSU-23(4) Shilka Self-Propelled AA Guns swivelling in your direction, and probably a BMP-2 IFV spoiling for a fight as well. Death is, needless to say, almost instantaneous, and a major rethinking of tactics is in order.

Zooming straight in, dropping a load of bombs and then zooming off again just doesn't work when you're in a helicopter, you see. You've got to be a bit more sneaky. First of all, study your map and assess the surrounding terrain. Find a group of likely-looking hills just next to the target. Then, keeping incredibly close to the ground – less than a hundred feet is ideal – creep up behind the hill and go into a hover.

Now then. Narrow your eyes, make sure your finger's poised above the fire button, take a deep breath, and slowly, really slowly, start to ease upwards. Up... up... up... till you can just peep over the top of the hill... and... Ooh! There's a tank! Quick, fire a couple of missiles before it sees you and then nip back behind the hill and wait for the explosion. Phew. And so it goes on, with you darting from hill to hill, picking off enemy defenders and closing in on your target.

It's scary, but jolly exciting.

Even so, though, I can't help feeling that *Gunship 2000* is just a bit harder than it needs to be. Why, for example, when you get briefed before the mission and shown a map of the target area, are you given no indication as to how the defences are laid out, where the missile launchers are and so on, so you can plan your tactics properly?

Usually, the first you know of a SAM launcher is when it's launched a SAM at you, by which time it's too late. Haven't these people heard of reconnaissance? And why does the otherwise quite useful auto-avoidance system, a sort of terrain-following radar that stops you

crashing into hills, keep suddenly hurling you into the air for no apparent reason, to the delight of the enemy gunners? And why, worst of all, is the collective (which alters the pitch of the rotors to make you go up and down) on the same button as the weapons-select, so every time you pop up from behind a hill you accidentally select a really crap weapon as well without realising it?

Apart from that, though, and a few other niggles (oh, all right then, like the awkward front-end menus where you have to point at bits of

ONE AVIATOR'S



1 As dawn broke, Paddy lifted off from Allied HQ.



5 And then, er... lots of grass appeared. And the sun came out.

VERDICT Probably not much easier than flying the real thing,

2000

OW

pictures to make things happen, with any atmosphere this might have added being shattered every time the ridiculous 'CD Access' screen comes up, and the way the unpleasant in-game music kept switching itself on, despite all my attempts to get rid of it), *Gunship 2000* is great.

There's a range of helicopters to fly in addition to the obvious Apache, and there are missions in Europe and the Middle East. There's a good selection of weapons from which you'll soon pick out a couple of favourites. The graphics are superbly

smooth, if not massively detailed, and you get to fly down valleys. And once you've turned the music off, the sound effects are suitably war-like. You've even got a co-pilot who shouts warnings and points out targets, although yelling 'Target left!' and locking the missiles onto your own control tower as soon as the game starts seems a little over-enthusiastic.

It's a difficult game, and one that can be bitterly frustrating to start off with, but *Gunship 2000* is undoubtedly the CD32's most helicoptery game to date. Chocka chocka.



This is what happens if you drop a brick on a custard doughnut.

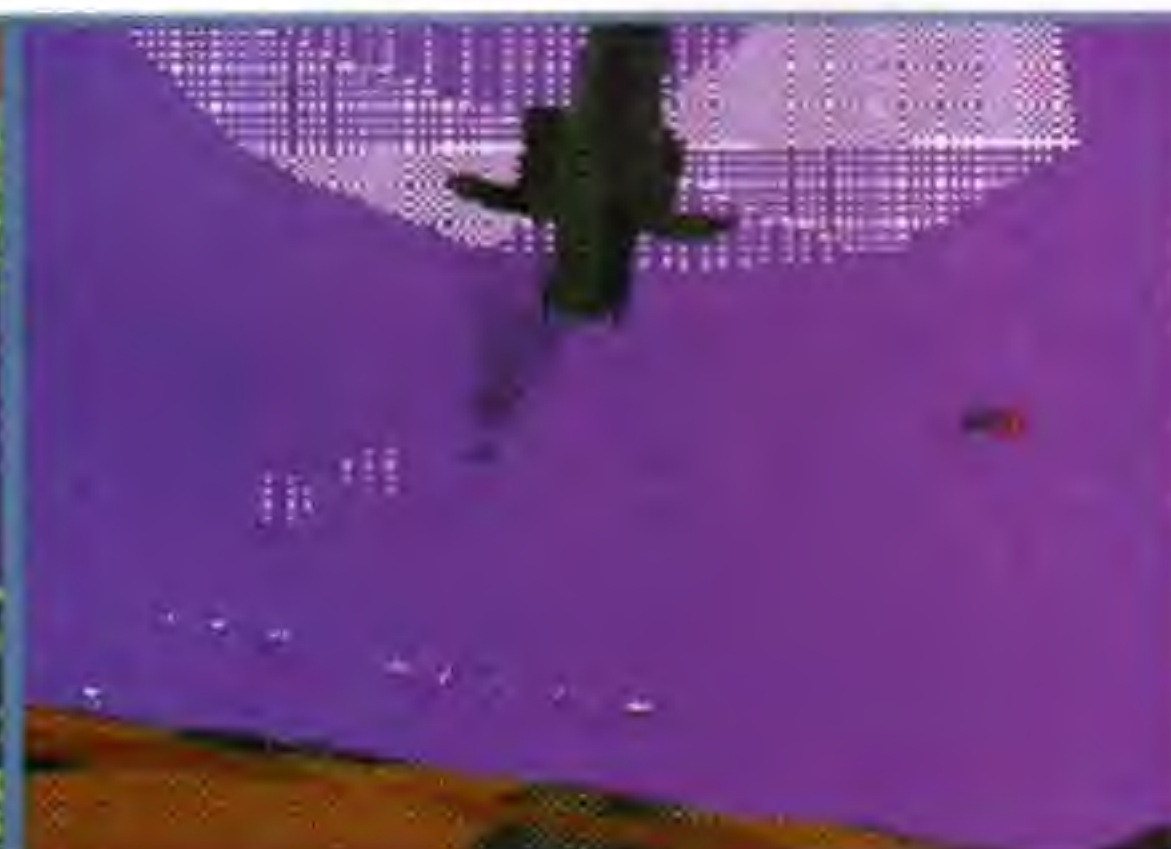


"Up... up... till you can just peep over the top of the hill..."

The main menu is modelled on an office. Sadly.



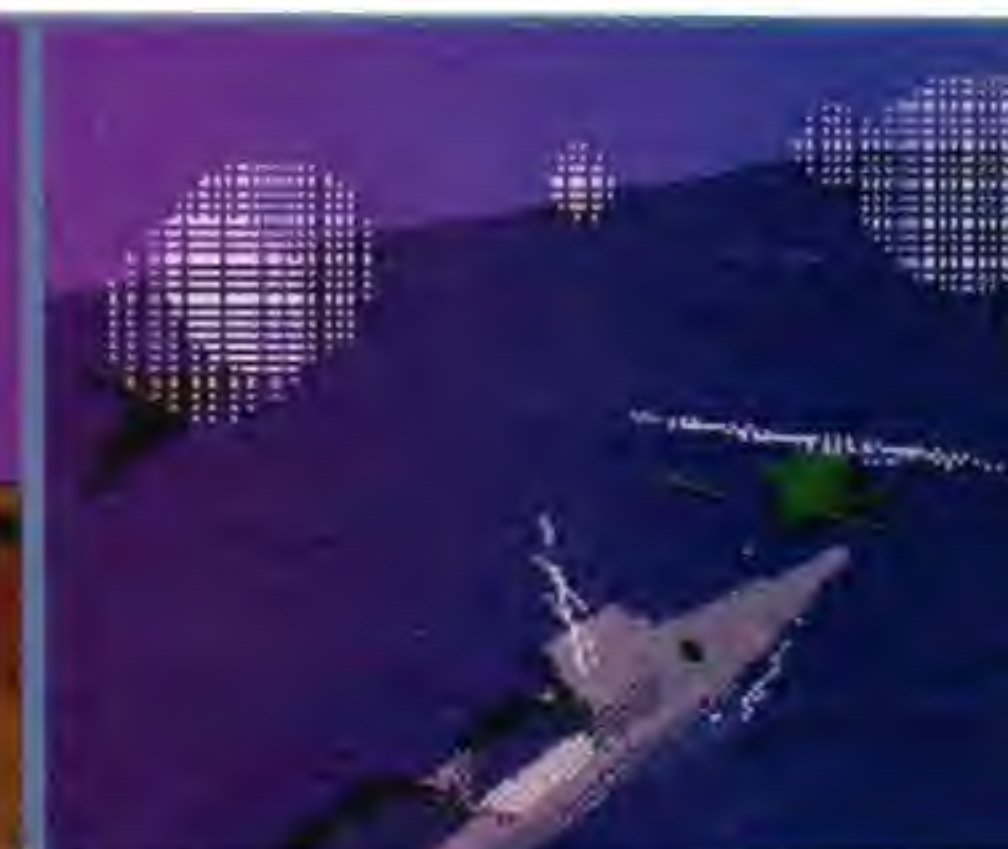
GRIPPING TALE OF HELICOPTER WARFARE



2 And it wasn't long before enemy missiles were filling the air.



3 He couldn't take any chances – the mission was too important.



4 So, er, he flew out to sea and attacked a ship for a while.



6 This was much later on, obviously, on another mission. Yes, that's it.



7 He was attacking a bridge. That stuff before was a bluff, you see.



8 Or was it a pyramid? Oh dear. This all seemed so clear yesterday.

but **plenty of rotory fun** once you get the hang of it.

89%

WEMBLEY INTERN



PROGRAMMER : GRAHAM BLIGHE • PUBLISHER : AUDIOGENIC (081) 424 2244 • PRICE : 29.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

Kick Off



Loads of options mean you should have complete control over the game, down to whether you've got a strict or lenient referee, but this doesn't always seem the case.

Play Options



Some people wear boots and jock straps to play football, but what Richard Jones does in the privacy of his own home with his CD32 is entirely his business...

division game compared to the premiership standards set by *Sensible Soccer*. But let's face it, *Sensible* is the best footie game for the CD32 and the others only offer variety rather than any serious competition.

Just as you're beginning to think that the person who called football *The Beautiful Game* had obviously never had the misfortune to play *WIS*, things start to get much better. A glimmer of light appears at the end of the (players') tunnel as you begin to string together moves and weight your passes more accurately.

Wembley International Soccer would still be a decidedly average game, but what gives it a chance of reaching the footie game first division play-offs are its neat play options, particularly the Pass To Player In Window feature.

This gives you the ability to pass directly to the player highlighted in the on-screen window by tapping the blue joystick button. Used in conjunction with the One Touch feature – tap the red fire button just before the ball reaches a player to make him head or volley it – this option can lead to some really fast-flowing moves that often result in spectacular goals. The only problem is that you don't always feel in complete control of the game.

It's a feeling that many football managers must be very familiar with. After spending a week on the training ground perfecting the finer points of the game, they send the lads out on to the park on a Saturday afternoon only to see them completely ignore the well-crafted set piece moves they practised. If only the boss had a joystick and blue button option.

The *Wembley International Soccer* Tactics Screen gives you the choice of five methods of play: Attacking, Defensive, Continental (you get a croissant at half time), British and Wingers. Within these options you can move players in the Tactics Screen by clicking on the numbers above their heads and moving them to the desired position.

Fooling around with this option is great fun and you can come up with some tremendously bizarre formations, such as placing your entire team on the left wing. It makes you wonder if ex-England supremo

Playing *Wembley International Soccer* is not an immediately fulfilling experience. Your outfield players tend to wander aimlessly around the pitch bumping into each other and occasionally hoofing the ball in the wrong direction, while the computer-controlled goalie performs all sorts of heroics.

If this was the real thing the rest of the team would be treated to torrents of choice abuse and fits of finger-wagging from the custodian of the onion bag.

This initial incompetence is a combination of the game not being the easiest to pick-up and play and the CD32 joystick not being the most accurate of control methods to use.

But give it time. If at first your players perform like a bunch of third-teamers after an all-night drinking session, persevere, because with a bit of application you can start to string together some half decent moves and time those tackles to perfection.

Mind you, *Wembley International Soccer* is a decidedly second

VERDICT

Loads of options should keep footie fans fascinated.

WEMBLEY INTERNATIONAL SOCCER



Graham Taylor came up with his defensive formation for the World Cup qualifier against Norway by spending a few idle moments in the *Wembley International Soccer* Tactics Editor.

There are loads of options in *Wembley International Soccer* and using them to the full certainly gives you the impression that you are shaping your team in an individual manner and fine-tuning the tactics you want them to play. The only problem is that actually implementing those tactics on the field of play is not as easy as it might be.

Dedicated footie game freaks will probably persevere with *Wembley International Soccer* and find its depth of options rewarding and exciting. But if you want a pick-up and play kick around, stick with *Sensible Soccer*.

You're left in no doubt when a team score. The players' reactions are suitably euphoric and there are extensive replay options.



There are two views in the game – top and side. Playing top view is almost impossible, but the side option gives you a good view of the action.



"Dedicated footie freaks will persevere with *Wembley International Soccer* and find its depth of options rewarding"

Tactics Editor

2 CONTINENTAL



The Tactics Editor gives you a huge range of options for shaping your team. Putting those tactics into practice is altogether more difficult.



A scything tackle from behind incurred the wrath of the referee and produced a booking for McBride.

Select Squad

1	N	WATSON
2	K	ROBSON
3	H	JAMES
4	N	GODDARD
5	J	SAWYER
6	A	CHAPMAN
7	F	HUNT
8	D	LAMBERT
9	I	WARNES
10	P	RICHARDS
11	A	BROWN
12	S	STEVENS
13	S	HAMPSON
14	T	THOMPSON
15	R	PETERS
16	R	SMITH

ENGLAND

J SAWYER

FITNESS
SPEED
TACKLING
AGILITY
0 GOALS

SWAP UNDO EXIT

Shame about the gameplay.

72%

Focus on a distant object, and then hold this page in front of your eyes. Move it slowly away, and the entire contents of October's AMIGA POWER should appear in 3D. (Apparently some people of particularly high intelligence may be unable to experience this effect. If you find this to be the case, we can only suggest you buy a copy of October's 3-disk AMIGA POWER from your newsagent.)

It's all in **AMIGA**
POWER

OUT TO LUNCH



PROGRAMMER : STEVE LENEY, PAUL GAZE, JEFF GAMON • DISTRIBUTOR : MINDSCAPE (0444) 248996 • PRICE : £26.00 • RELEASE

Jonathan Nash once catered for a party of 27 – even with a knife in his ribs meant for Lena Zavaroni's mother.



I watched as Pierre le Chef bounced after sentient food, waving his fishing net optimistically. Nary a flicker of a smile crossed my face as Pierre's hat flapped unaerodynamically in the slipstream caused by his hardy sprinting, and I retained my composure even as Pierre caught a stunning blow against an overhanging ledge and fell shakily to the ground with a double-vision effect. But then the plucky chef fell

foul of a rampaging salmonella bacterium. Sucked in by the ruthless monster, he peered out helplessly through the grey membranous skin, beating his fists against it in futile terror. And then, with a flex and a swallow, he was gone.

Absorbed. Dead. And, dear readers, I don't mind admitting that I sobbed. Rackingly.

Pierre, you see (and, indeed, his cohorts in the game) are truly engaging. The vigilante chef cuts a dashing figure in his apron and vast hat, never allowing the horribly perilous nature of his situation to displace his roguish smirk. While his fleeing anthropomorphosised ingredients – whether hopping around attempting hopelessly optimistically to avoid the clutching web of Pierre's net (and understandably the consequent devouring alive), slumping stunned following a well-placed flour bag or stalking our culinary hero with venom in their hearts after being poisoned by a potato gone bad only to be deservedly and yet heartbreakingly dispatched by terrible crushing of the head –

behave at all times with impeccable poise and style.

The game is, and don't hold this against it, a platformer. No, look, I gave you fair warning. It's a

platformer with all the associated gameplay traits of leaping, collecting, ferreting out

secret rooms and gleaning bonuses from the most unlikely locations.

It's also a platformer with several of the more tatty faults of the breed, including unpassable walls and ledges that look exactly the same as ones you can happily walk through, comically hidden traps and oddly schizophrenic platform edges that let you fall off them while refusing to let you jump.

Furthermore, and this really caused me to twist my lips, the game shoves its frequent disk accessing up your nose with loading screens blank but for a message saying – no! But yes! – 'Loading'. Aaarghh.

JOHN CAZALE

Damn fortunate, then, that *Out To Lunch* is such a playable game. Its 48 levels are divided among six countries, each with its own cast of ingredients and monsters (such as peppers and mosquitoes in Mexico and olives and killer lemons in Greece), and the small but perfectly formed graphics allow for large, cunning level designs. Hearteningly, the mechanics are spot on, even if Pierre does have weight and momentum, chiz chiz.

It's all enjoyably fussy, requiring you not only to capture the ingredients and deposit them in a



Die, hideous



1 The envelope of evil that is the bacterium must be destroyed.

VERDICT A polished, superior (but noticeably

LUNCH

OUT NOW

OUT to LUNCH

terrifyingly Viet Cong-like cage, but first to find your trusty net and a decent weapon – as well as constantly rushing back to the cage to foil your sinister counterpart Le Chef Noir's spiteful attempts to free the ingredients, destroying the fiendish bacteria before they infect the food and coping with attacks by that particular country's antagonists – and all this against a time limit.

Throw in sub-games aplenty, including point-netting races against the clock and bizarre shopping trips where you have to prevent your trolley from being crushed by the screen scroll, and you'll appreciate there's a lot to *Out To Lunch*, despite (and this is really its major shortcoming) the distinct lack of variety between levels.

It's all jumping around and catching things with no appreciable difference in difficulty beyond reducing the time you get to start with, but the scenery and fantastically atmospheric music help spur you on. I like it lots, which surely must count for something. Or possibly not.



"Stalking our culinary hero with venom in their hearts"



Not as good as fencing with the wooden spoon, but still a very silly extra weapon.



Stewart pursed his lips crossly as the trio caught sight of TV's famous Pip.



Rob the Swiss of laundered drug money in this exciting sub-game.



An airy chef's hat proves little protection against 20 tons of rock.

Visit strange and exciting new places, and throw condiments from their curly roofs.



malformed spawn of evil, beneath the crushing heels of righteousness



2 Chirpy Pierre catches it a vicious clip with the flour bag of justice.

3 Hurling his entire weight squarely on to its back, he kills the beast.

4 But – oh no! – its twin leaps down to exact revenge. Pauvre Pierre.

samey) platformer that's at times exasperatingly difficult.

78%

LEMMINGS



PROGRAMMER : DMA DESIGN • DISTRIBUTOR : PSYGNOSIS (051) 709 5755 • PRICE : £25.99 • RELEASED : OUT NOW

Lemmings may be pretty stupid creatures but they're good for a laugh. Andy Dyer gets to grips with one of the classic games of all time.



The introductory sequence is the same as on the disk version. No CD enhancements here.



Sometimes it's impossible to see a way out. Get that brain in gear.



"The *Lemmings* concept is simple, but the best ones always are"



Take things a step at a time and you'll be fine.

It all started three years ago when someone, somewhere thought it might be quite a hoot to create a game featuring the mass suicide of dozens of little lemmings. The aim? To save them of course, but at the same time enabling the player to witness just enough scenes of slightly sicko lemming-related death to keep them interested.

Immediately *Lemmings* became a classic and is not only much emulated, but is also somewhat of a yardstick in terms of puzzle game playability. However, it's an old game now, and it's just possible a few of you out there don't know what it's all about, so for those in the dark read on. Anyone else might as well skip the next few paragraphs really.

The *Lemmings* concept is a simple one, but the best ones always are, aren't they? I mean, look at the steam engine, which works by merely converting the pressure of steam via a piston through a, um, oh what's that twirly bit called? Oh, never mind... The point is it's very simple. A whole gang of lemmings drop out of a trap door somewhere on the screen and make their way at a uniform speed around the level falling off cliffs, turning around at blockages and inevitably dying when they fall too far, or walk

into a lava pit or something. The player has no direct control over the lemmings but instead has to save them by allocating tasks.

Along the bottom of the screen is a series of icons representing tasks such as digging, bridge-building and floating. You only have a limited number of these tasks available, and only certain tasks are accessible on certain levels. So it's your job to quickly study the level, then economically allocate the tasks in order to save as many of the lemmings as possible.

A simple theoretical example might be a level with a huge fiery pit that stands between your lemmings and the exit. In this case you'd turn your first lemming into a bridge builder to bridge the gap, then the second one would become a blocker to stop the other lemmings blindly wandering past to their deaths.

Once the bridge is built you blow up the blocker lemming (yes, I know it's a bit cruel but drastic situations require drastic measures – and besides, it's a laugh) and the rest of your lemming-esque chums can escape. And that's it. That's the game, all of it. There is nothing else to explain, except of course that the

IT'S EASY, ONCE



1 In this level, you only need to save half the lemmings. A double bonus!

VERDICT

Doesn't even attempt to be a CD title. But it's still

GS

variety and challenge in *Lemmings* comes not from this simplistic game engine but from the inclusion of over 100 beautifully structured levels.

Welcome back those of you who already knew the game. Now it's time to see why the CD32 version is so special. Right let's see, hmm, oh dear. OK, well, the truth of the matter is that the people at Psygnosis have been a lazy bunch and not really done anything to the CD version. It's the disk version with slightly better sound. I might as well explain now that ultimately it doesn't matter, the game is and always will be a classic and the gameplay is practically perfect, so it still scores highly, but you'd think they'd have added something to it.

As far as I could tell the game's identical to the original Amiga version without any graphical wizardry, no specially-designed-for-CD intro sequence, not even a fact screen on real lemmings with a bit of Full Motion Video of them plummeting to their deaths. It's a shame because the CD's storage capacity could have meant, at the most, the inclusion of more levels and at the very least, some of those

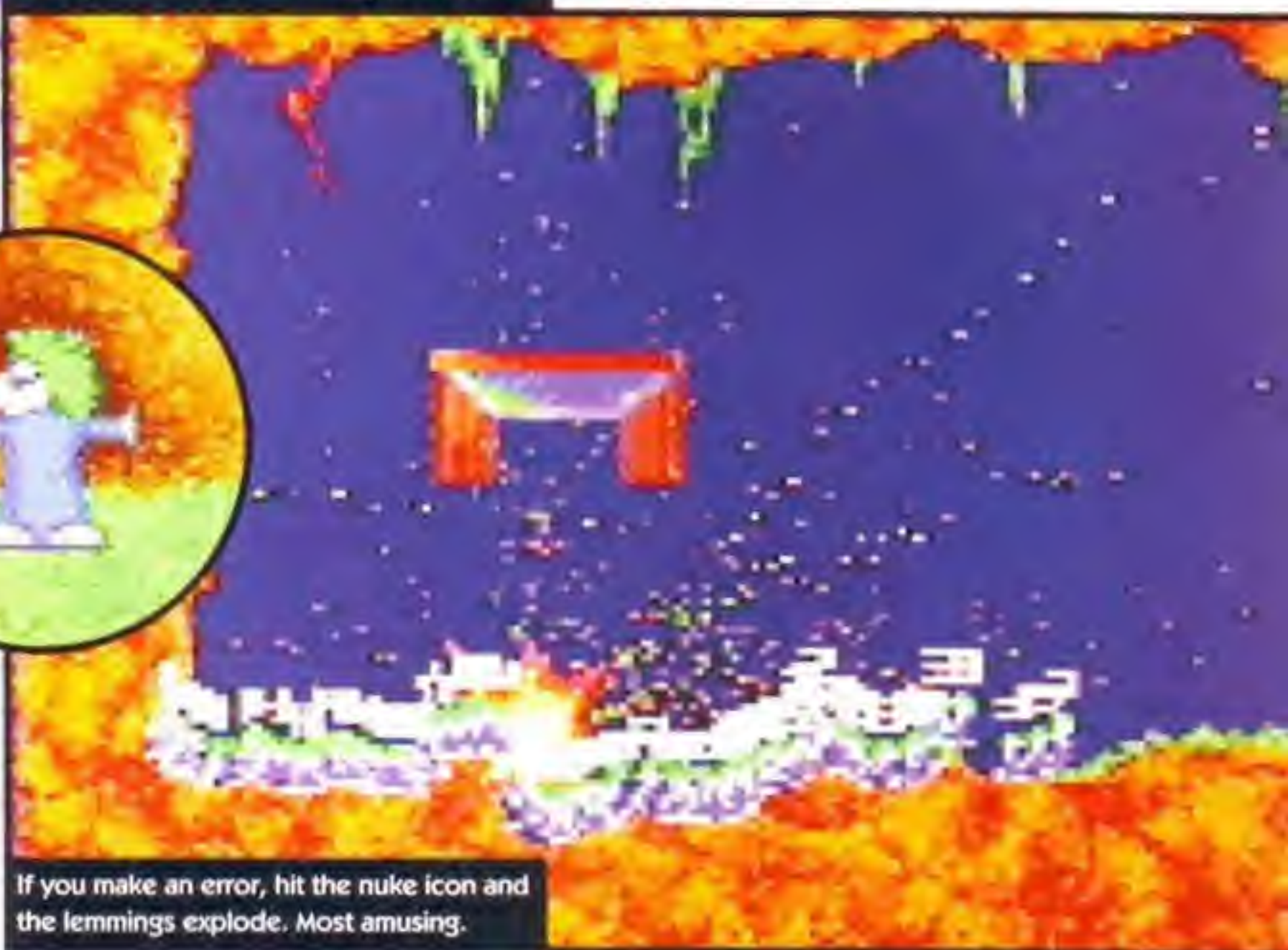
purely cosmetic, yet quite pretty CD-type animated sequences that us CD-ROM fans have come to know and be apathetic about. Ah well. All we can say is, *Lemmings* is one of the best games of all time, even without any frills.



Another scene from the intro. A cosmetic touch, but mildly entertaining to watch.



"*Lemmings* is one of the best games of all time"



If you make an error, hit the nuke icon and the lemmings explode. Most amusing.

YOU KNOW HOW...



2 Let one lemming through, set up a blocker, then build a bridge.

3 Keep the blocker in place and change the lemming into a digger.

4 Blow up the blocker (hit it) and the rest walk to safety. Easy!

one of the **most incredibly original** puzzle games ever.

92%

SABRE

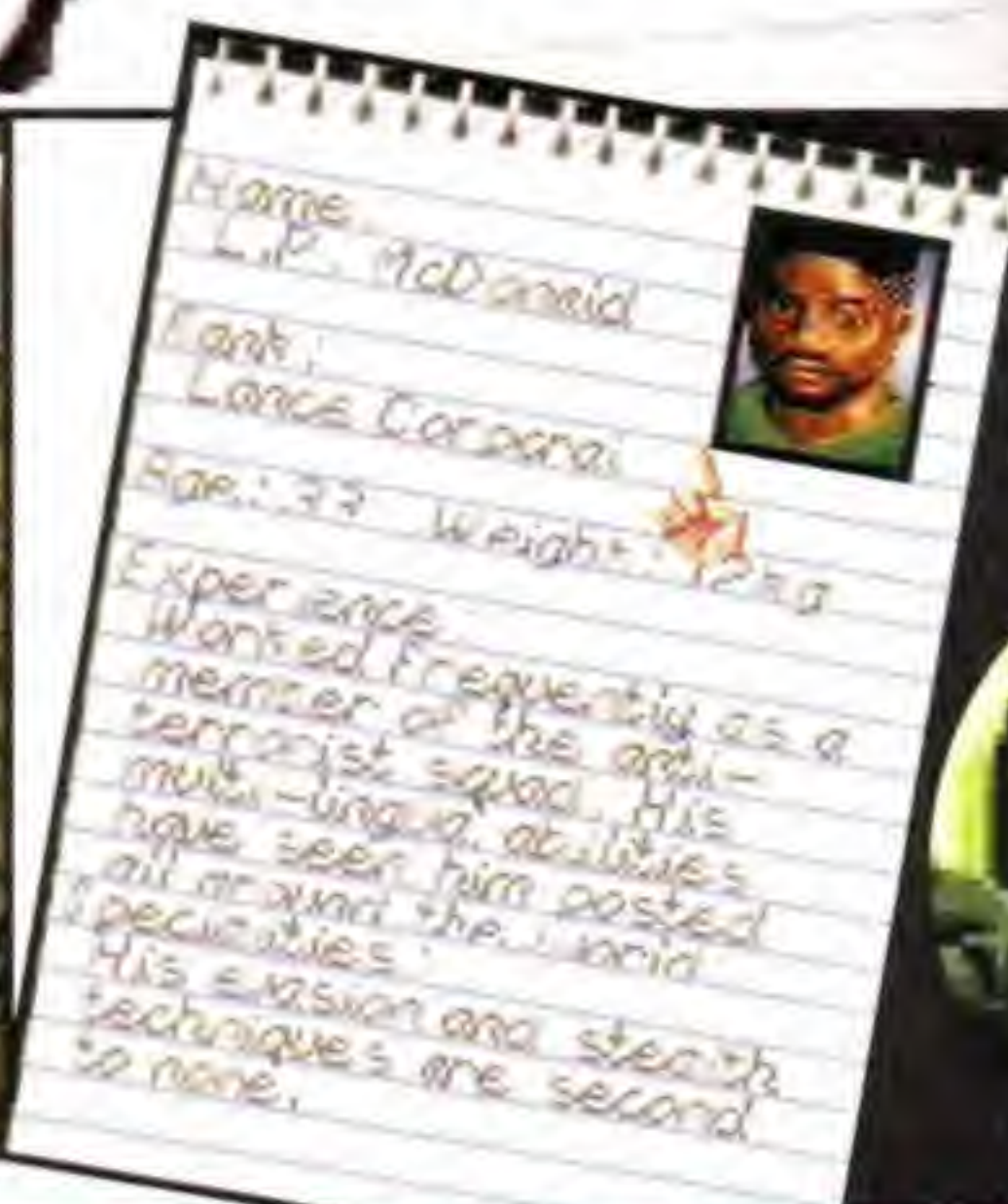


PROGRAMMER : **MATT FURNISS** • DISTRIBUTOR : **KRISALIS (0709) 372890** • PRICE : **£39.99** • RELEASED : **OUT NOW**

Who dares wins, or something like that.
Steve McGill dared and found out that
Sabre Team on the CD32 is a winner.



Wouldn't it be great to dress up in black and drop in on friends unexpectedly?



Years and years ago, the SAS stormed the Iranian embassy in London and rescued a whole load of people being held hostage by some nasty terrorist types. It was terribly exciting for those people old enough to remember it. And even today it

looks good with a music track played over the original film footage in the *Rock And Roll Years*.

If you've ever thought about the what if's and the planning that has to be done with this type of operation, then ponder no longer. Thank's to *Sabre Team* from Krisalis you can now realise that dream.

There are five missions in all in the game; Embassy Siege, Jungle POW Camp, War Games, Liner Hijack and Missile

Guidance. Each involves a different scenario and terrain. Each is progressively more difficult. But the experience you gain

from previous missions goes a long way toward helping you shape up for the others.

Sabre Team is a derivative of an older game which first appeared years ago on the ZX Spectrum – *Laser Squad*. All the game mechanics are based on movement points and turns.

You begin the game with a team of up to four players chosen from a pool of eight. From the outset you have to think about the environment the team members are going to be operating in and choose their equipment accordingly.

And that's one of the little niggles of *Sabre Team*. The selection of equipment for the team members you've chosen is a bit fiddly with the joypad. It's more suited to a mouse. It's not a major point, just one that you should be aware of.

Each team member has eight slots which can be filled with various types of military hardware, such as guns, bullets, stun grenades, CS gas canisters and bullet-proof vests. After a few plays, you find yourself fine tuning the best gear to take. Exploring deliberations like what the most effective weapon at close quarters is and all those other considerations are all part of the fun of the game.

But the real fun begins when you embark on the first of the five missions. Each team member has a certain number of action points. The amount of action points depends on variables such as the member's state of health (if he's riddled with bullets he's not going to have many) and the amount of equipment he's carrying.

Everything the little men do consumes action points – walking, changing weapons and shooting. So rigorous planning is essential if smooth execution of a mission is to be realised.

Other important considerations are the placement of the enemy and the line of sight between team



VERDICT The perfect antidote to all those theories

TEAM



Community tax collectors were trained for any eventuality in 1994.



"Sabre Team is a derivative of an older game that first appeared years ago on the ZX Spectrum – *Laser Squad*"



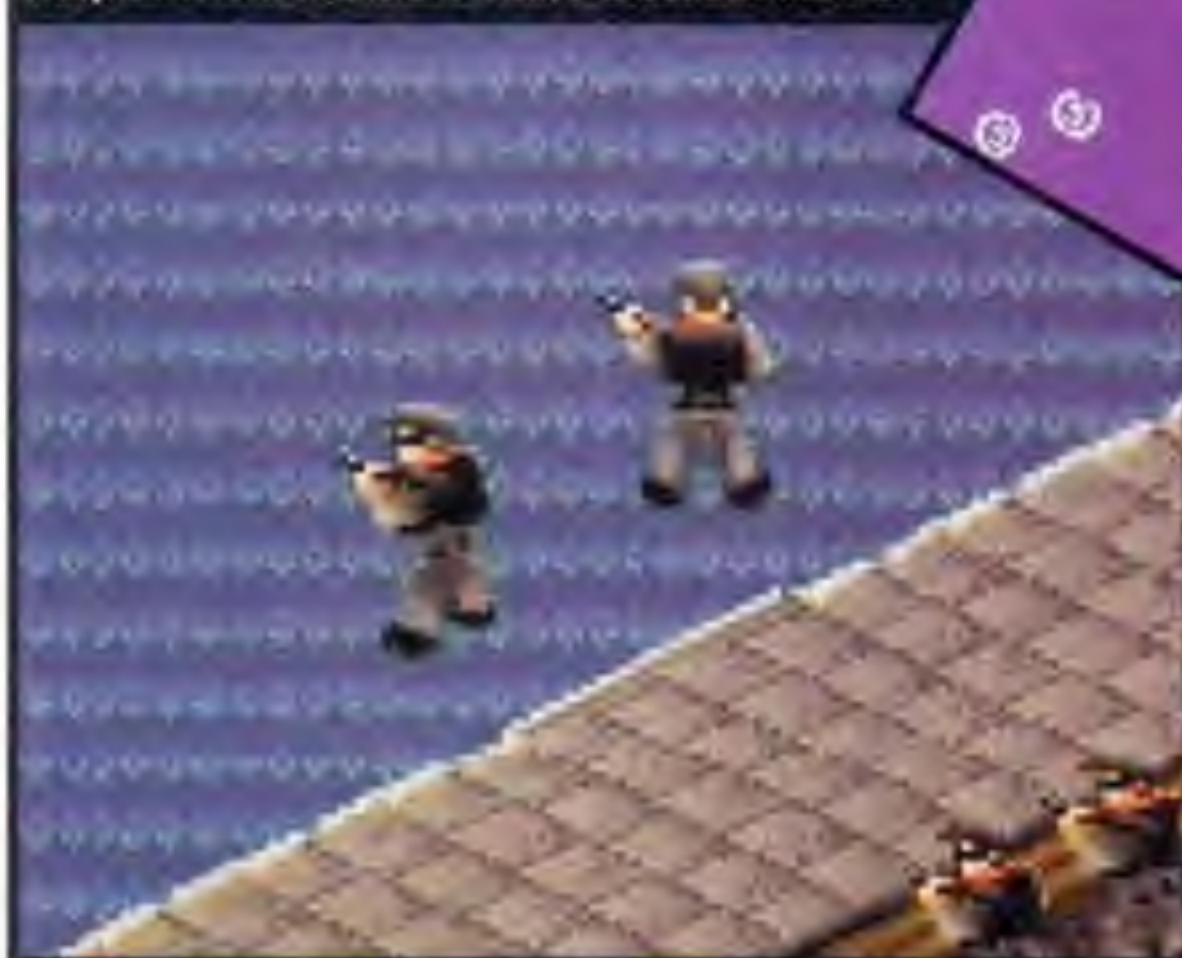
Choose four players from this motley crew.

members and terrorists. Saving some action points lets your men fire back if a terrorist happens upon them. And, er, that's it really.

The disappointing aspect with the CD32 version of *Sabre Team* is that more missions weren't included. There's literally bags of room on a CD and it would have given the game a much longer playing life. At least with the A1200 version there will eventually be some data disk releases. But with CD32 you're not going to have that option.

But ending on a gripe wouldn't be a good thing for this game. There are literally months of gameplay locked into *Sabre Team* when you consider the variables. Once you become too good at it, you could start handicapping yourself.

Covering the back of the team members helps you keep all of them alive and well. Protect and survive.



Line of sight plays an integral part when setting up your men in important positions.



that you think of when hostage dramas unfold in real life.

87%



BANSHEE



PROGRAMMER: **SOREN HANNIBAL** • PUBLISHER: **CORE DESIGN (0332) 297797** • PRICE: **£29.99** • RELEASED: **OUT NOW**

Richard Jones takes to the skies in a small, but perfectly formed aeroplane to do battle with the malign and halitosis-ridden forces of evil.



Blasting things in the snow is great fun. Afterwards you can build a snowman.

screams as they run to their death or are reduced to a pile of bones in a highly graphical and unpleasant manner?

Sir Fotherington adjusts his monocle pointedly, takes a deep breath and coughs loudly in the direction of the

And now we go live to Westminster for Prime Minister's Question Time...

'Order, Order, OrrDER. The Right Honourable Member for Little Toosey.' (Sir Fotherington D'Underhed rises slowly and purposefully to his feet, adjusts his monocle and clears his throat.)

'Would the Prime Minister agree that young people's minds are being poisoned by the profusion of violence and mindless slaughter in so-called video games, and would he further concur that one such of these games, *Banshee*, is nothing short of a gratuitous and quite disgraceful exercise in carnage?

'Does the Prime Minister realise that in *Banshee* one or two players are expected to shoot planes and helicopters out of the sky, destroy tanks and other ground-based artillery and to kill and horribly maim troops – all in the name of entertainment?

'And is he further aware that when ground troops are hit by a hail of bullets and bombs they burst into flames and utter blood-curdling

press gallery. A red-nosed reporter stops picking his teeth and sits alert with pen poised over notebook. The Honourable Member draws himself creakily erect and surveys the empty green seats.

'Will the Prime Minister act now (waves papers defiantly at empty seats) to protect the flower of the nation's youth against the scourge of the evil empire of video nasties that is sweeping all that is decent and moral before them?'

Sir Fotherington slumps to his seat as a few stray grunts of Hear! Hear! echo around the chamber. The picture fades back to the studio announcer: 'Later this evening in our series *Making Britain Great*, we'll be reporting on the success of a British arms company which has created five new jobs with a £30 million arms deal to the Middle East, and talking to company chairman Sir Fotherington D'Underhed...'

FLYING TONIGHT

Banshee is a gloriously uncomplicated vertically-scrolling aeroplane shoot-em-up in the tradition

It's reassuring cruising along with big planes to protect you. What! They're firing at me. Yikes!



IVERDICT

A high-flying frenzy of



EE



of the arcade classic *1942* – you know the sort of thing that kids with dodgy haircuts, flared jeans and spots pumped handfuls of 10 pence pieces into before they became accountants and social workers.

Anyway, *1942* was tremendous fun, but *Banshee* is better, and the year is 1999, not 1942. You, in the tradition of heroes with silly names, are Sven Svardensvart and your task is to thwart Blardax Maldrear's evil, halitosis-ridden, thoroughly anti-social, Styx Empire. But you really don't need to know that.

In fact, your life wouldn't be any the poorer if you didn't know that there are four levels of *Banshee* – The Atlantikan Ocean, Styx City, Arctic Wastes and Aridona Desert and Planet Veenix – Styx Forward Command Base – but there are.

No, all you need to know about *Banshee* is that it is a bullet-spraying, bomb-blasting, rip-roaring gem of a shoot-em-up. And you can loop the loop if you want to.

The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are a relentless barrage of pounding artillery and engine noise. The little folk on the ground die horribly (in much the same way as they do in *Cannon Fodder* or *Syndicate*), but you're far too busy pouring lead into the evil enemy and avoiding being blasted into small pieces to notice that.

Even an ardent pacifist will be chortling with glee at their hugely destructive capabilities within minutes of taking to the air. You don't *need* to shoot all the caps on the ground – in the Arctic Level they make a red and white mess that looks like semolina with the strawberry jam stirred in (the dinner ladies at school told us not to do that because it upset the girls – strange that) – but you'll even shoot the ones you could easily avoid.

Banshee may not take full advantage of the CD32's remarkable potential (it's basically exactly the same as the A1200 game), but it's one hell of a shoot-em-up. Buy it.



"Even an ardent pacifist will chortle with glee at their destructive capabilities"



If you thought deserts were all camels and sand castles, you're Gobi joking.



Get in the swing to avoid being squashed by this end of level obstacle.



Take out the tank, fly through the bridge and wreak havoc on the other side.

fire-button-pounding. ***Banshee* is a scream.**

87%

LETTERS

In the first issue of *Amiga CD32* we answered *Amiga Format's* CD32 mail. Now we're getting letters sent in direct to *Amiga CD32*. And here's some of them with answers. Hurrah!

'Searching the world'

I spent six and a half months searching the world for a FMV module for my CD32 and finally in May 1994, I succeeded. I was not disappointed. The still shots that have been in all of the FMV reviews do not do it justice. I strongly recommend that anybody who can afford, or maybe save up for one, should! It must be seen to be believed.

I have also recently found out that only 1,000 units were shipped into the UK in February 1994, so considering that over 70,000 people had a CD32, I only had a 1:43333 chance of getting one! But it was worth all the phone calls.

I also noticed that any CD which has an MPEG linear encoded track works on the CD32. One of my friends showed me a demo CD that was on the front of a CDi (boo, hiss) magazine, but the interactive *7th Guest* worked perfectly. On the CD I witnessed the CDi (more boos and hisses) version of *Microcosm*. Well, now that does look good! Will we ever see an FMV version of the CD32 game I wonder?

Steve Swan, Wootton, Northampton

The only thing stopping more FMV titles being made is that, as you said, there just aren't that many FMV carts out there.

An FMV version of Microcosm is unlikely – anyone who wants Microcosm has already bought it! – but David Pleasance assures us that there are some FMV games in productions which, he claims, are "awesome".



If you want to know more about Full Motion Video turn to page 12.

'The console barrier'

I am a very loyal Amiga fan and I have owned my A500+ for two years, but now I am thinking of stepping into the console barrier. My friend owns an Amiga CD32 and I think it's an excellent machine and I am thinking of getting one – or should I? Can you please help me with my decision.

1. Can the CD32 display its special HAM8 mode in a game and if so, do you think that programmers will take advantage of this mode?
2. Can the CD32 display more colours than the SNES and the 3DO?
3. Will beat-em-ups such as *Street Fighter II* and *Mortal Kombat* ever get converted on to the CD32?
4. Will Virgin's most successful *7th Guest* get converted on to the CD32?
5. Does the CD32 have any advantages over the 3DO and the Atari Jaguar?
6. Will the price drop for the CD32 and FMV card when other specs get released?

Lawrence Lee, Telford

1. Using HAM8 mode (up to 262,144 colours on screen) in a game takes up a lot of the machine's processing power, and so it can only usefully be used to show still images such as intro screens.
2. CD32 matches the SNES with both machines usefully displaying 256 colours on screen at one time. 3DO boasts a 15-bit, 32,000 colour display, although the poor screen resolution spoils the effect.
3. It's doubtful that anyone will convert either of these beat-em-ups to the CD32 – which is a shame, as the machine could handle them with ease!
4. Well, successful it may have been; fun it ain't. *7th Guest* is an overrated puzzle game with snazzy graphics – and so you won't be too disappointed to hear that there are no plans for a CD32 version.
5. The main advantage of the CD32 over the other machines is that it has full Video CD compatibility with the FMV cart, and, more importantly, loads of playable games for it! The Jaguar has only one decent game so far – a version of the archaic coin-op *Tempest*. Likewise, 3DO has plenty of games, but only a few, such as EA's *John Madden* and *Road Rash*, are anything like playable. Most of them are garbage!
6. The price of the CD32 and FMV cart will no doubt fall as more and more systems are sold.

'One might argue'

I have just upgraded from an A500 to a CD32 and am very worried about the fact that it will die out in 1995.

In your interview with Mr Pleasance (*Amiga CD32* issue 1) he seemed not to be at all worried about the imminent threat from the Japanese super consoles.

The CD32's CISC architecture is too slow to compete with PS-X and Saturn's dedicated 3D hardware. PS-X is planned to be released this Autumn in Japan at ¥30,000 (£200) and will soon have software such as an arcade-perfect conversion of *Ridge Racer*.

One might argue that by the end of 1994 the CD32 will be in a lower price range, but Sega have plans to release a Mega Drive 32 early in '95 for £175-£200.

Are Commodore planning to release a cheap (but very powerful) add-on co-processor to give the CD32 better graphics capabilities, or are they going to sit back

and watch the machine (that could rescue them from financial ruin) get drowned by the Japanese console giants?

A Rosen, Highgate, London

Well, first of all Sony's PlayStation will cost nearer ¥50,000 (£320) when it appears in Japan in November 1994. And bear in mind that it won't be officially available in the UK until September of next year!

Similarly, the 32-bit Mega Drive add-on is looking decidedly dodgy, so any worries you have about the CD32 getting crushed under a Japanese invasion are a little premature.

However, it's true to say that the CD32 won't have the market to itself forever; Commodore need to look toward a CD32 MkII (a CD64 perhaps?) if they intend keeping their niche in the console market.

'My hobby is programming'

1. I have a CD32 and an Amiga 500 with extra memory, extra disk drive and a nine-pin black and white printer. I have heard about a Microbotics SX-1 module that will allow me to connect my disk drive and printer to my CD32, could you please tell me exactly what it can do and how much it will cost?

2. Can my CD32 play those photo-CDs?

3. Can I connect my CD32 to a modem?

4. My hobby is programming, if I made a CD32-compatible game, are there any companies that would put it on to a CD and do you know the code for reading the other buttons on the CD32 controller?

Matthew Hinchcliffe, Tonbridge, Kent

1. See our review of the SX-1 on page 18.

2. Yes indeedly: the CD32 can handle any multi-session CDs.

3. Not really: you could only usefully do it via the SX-1 expansion module.

4. If your game is good enough, most of the Amiga-supporting software houses might talk to you about publishing it on CD. You need to get in touch with Commodore for the code to read the CD32 controller buttons: speak to Sharon McGuffie at Commodore UK on (0628) 70088.

'Behind the rest of the field'

I am writing to you to ask a few questions which are troubling me:

1. Is *Super Street Fighter II* ever going to come out on the CD32, because it would make an excellent game due to the CD32 technology?

2. I feel that Commodore are falling behind the rest of the field in terms of technology. Comparing the CD32 to some of the newer machines coming out like Sony's PlayStation (PS-X), Atari's Jaguar, Sega's Saturn, Nintendo's Ultra 64 and Panasonic's 3DO is like comparing a Robin Reliant to a Ferrari F40. What are Commodore going to do?

3. Please could you put the above consoles in order of technological ability.

4. Why does every other console seem to get all the good arcade smashes, such as *Mortal Kombat II* and *Super Street Fighter II*? Don't say 'Oh, well what about *Body Blows*?' because it's absolute crap!

5. Is Commodore's next super console going to have more than one CPU such as the Jaguar, Saturn and Mega 32X (the Mega Drive's new add-on)? If Commodore created a super-powerful console I am sure it would sell well, take the Atari Jaguar for



There's no hope of *Mortal Kombat II* being released for the CD³² in the near future. But if you can't do without it then tell all your friends to buy CD³²s.

example, nearly everyone I know wants one of them, even I was tempted to buy one because it was addressed as 64-bit.
Anon, Crewe, Cheshire

1. Not that we know of.
2. No-one knows – but Commodore's next generation RISC machines would make a massively powerful games machine.
3. In order of technical prowess (based on what we've seen so far) they have to go: Sony PlayStation, Nintendo Ultra 64, Sega Saturn, then 3DO with Jaguar bringing up the rear.
4. The simple truth is that there are millions of SNESs and Mega Drives around the world – and probably only 100,000 CD³²s. Sadly, software houses go where the money is...
5. Sorry – we're not very good at predicting the future!

'Still a dream'

I have just purchased a CD³² and I would like to say that it is no way underrated. I have been a keen Amiga user for four years, and this is just reward for perseverance and support.

I know you get hundreds of letters every month saying why one console is better than another but I am sick of hearing that the only advantage the CD³² has over competitors is that it is here now and plenty of cheap software is available.

I have seen a 3DO on import. The games are crap, the video fuzzy, and the disk accessing considerably slower than an Amiga floppy drive.

The Atari Jaguar has been around for months and there is only one decent game available and the CD toilet add-on still isn't available. Like the Falcon, the Jaguar was tipped to be a real Amiga beater and flopped. Who says the hype surrounding other consoles is any different?

The Sony PS-X is still a dream, the Sega and Nintendo offerings are even further away from completion, so no one knows how good they'll be.

Also, I would like to tell everybody to stop asking for proper CD games. The CD-only games are in development, and rushing the developers will just reduce their overall quality.

I have seen the various CD³² connection kits and they're all crap. And the price of the SX-1 is a joke. I have an A600. It has a keyboard, disk drive, hard drive and numerous ports. Why can't just one company make a CD³² connection kit that uses the CD³² as the master, instead of the other way around. If I had wanted a 16-bit CD-ROM I could have bought a CDTV.

Finally, it may seem odd that I bought a CD³² in Commodore's time of strife, but I

have complete faith in the Amiga hardware if nothing else and Commodore were doing a good job, why Commodore even existed in the US where there isn't even an Amiga market I will never know.

Jonathon Herbert, St. Helier, Jersey

Hardware buyers are always paranoid: as soon as you buy your machine someone promises to bring out something new. Obsolescence is the bane of any gamer's life! So, as you say, you have to make the most of what you've got, now. Enjoy it while you can and then upgrade when you get bored of it.

If you really want 32-bit CD computing, your best bet might be to flog all your existing kit and use the cash to buy an A1200 and CD-ROM drive. Which will still be able to run your CD³² software.

'The best buy'

I own an Amiga CD³² and I bought the first issue of your magazine as it and the demo CD on the cover were very good. After buying various other magazines available for the CD³² yours seemed to be the best buy.

But my problem is that I am unable to find any shops which sell your other issues. So I am writing to you to ask if you could possibly send me a subscription form to your magazine so that I can get it every month?

Tom McIlvenny, Newtownabbey, N Ireland

The problem is that, so far, Amiga CD³² isn't a true monthly publication, so we can't give you a subscription to it! Our sister magazine Amiga Format reviews CD³² discs every issue (as well as covering the whole world of Amiga) and whenever

there's a new issue of Amiga CD³² you'll hear about it first in Amiga Format.

(Subscribers to Amiga Format can also get Amiga CD³² magazine at a special reduced price!)

Disgusted of Kent

I own an Amiga CD³² and am disgusted by the software support. When are there going to be true 32-bit titles available? I am pig sick of disk ports that are enhanced. It's a con, they are still 16-bit with 16-bit graphics. There has been one title and that is *Microcosm*.

The future 32-bit titles such as *Rise Of The Robots* are coming out on A500, so the CD³² version will be a disk port with added colour and an intro. It sickens me.

The 3DO has true software support. Please tell me if the future of the CD³² is going to get better. And I don't mean if one or two games are coming, I mean loads of CD³²-only titles, like *Microcosm* and *Scavenger 4*.

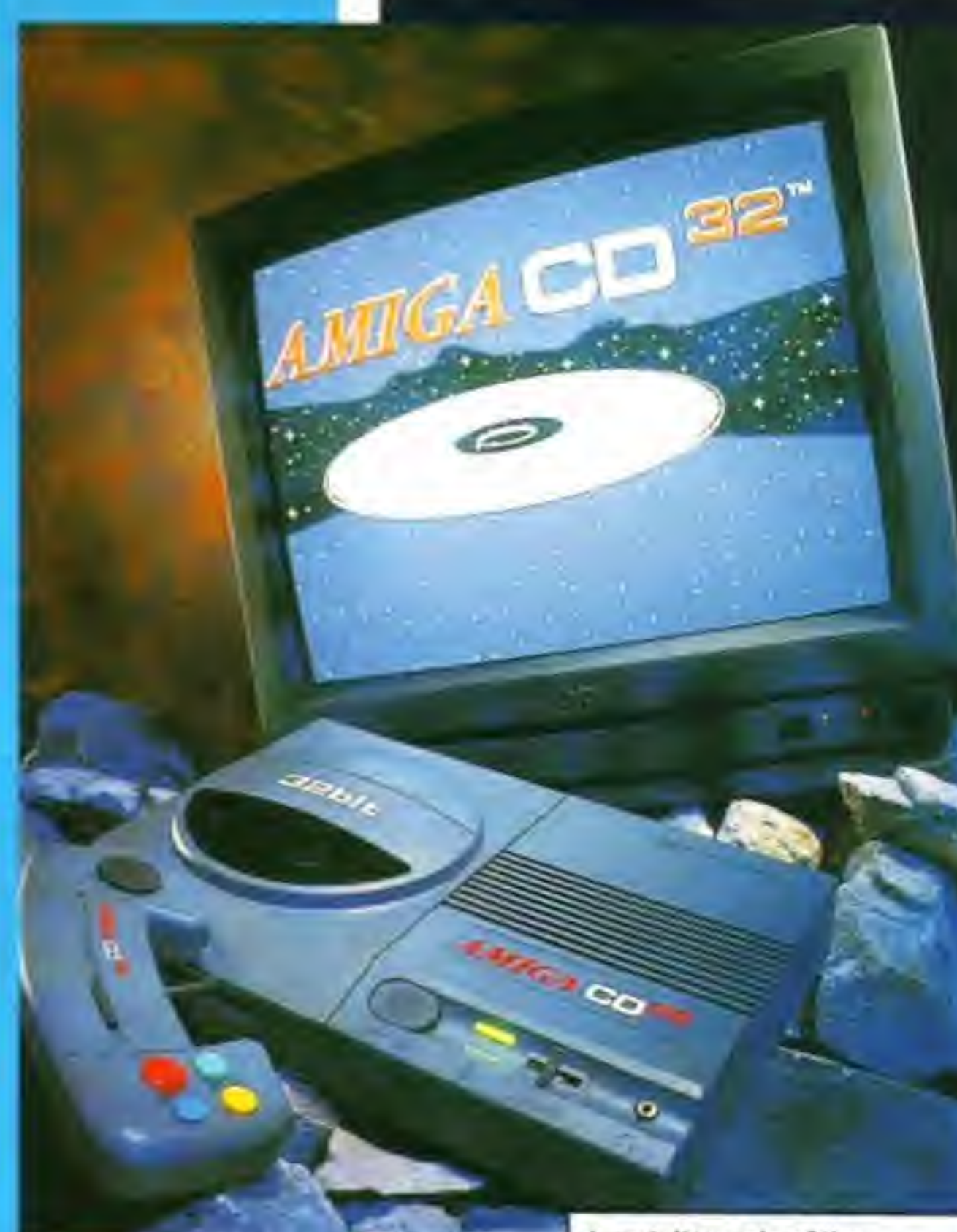
Craig Jones, Tonbridge, Kent

This very issue we preview two hot CD-only games – Mega Race and The Lost Eden, and there are several other CD-only games in development. However, with so many A1200s around, you can't really blame software houses for porting their games over – and at least the new games are proper 32-bit titles.

That's it for this issue. If you have any more CD³²-related questions or problems, then keep those letters coming in.



Send your
letters to:
**The Editor,
Amiga CD³²,
30 Monmouth
Street,
Bath, Avon
BA1 2BW.**



A gratuitous pic of the CD³². We just had to get another one in the magazine. And why not? Just look at how sexy it is.

'A job well done'

Congratulations *Amiga CD³²* magazine for a job well done.

The FMV is not available in Australia as yet. Will we get it? How much is it in England?

It is good to see a magazine dedicated to the CD³² as I don't own an Amiga keyboard computer and the other mags don't have all that much CD³² stuff in them for the price they cost out here.

The demo disc is a great idea, pity I couldn't get *Pirates! Gold* or *Nick Faldo's Golf*. But all the others were terrific. I bought a mouse for the CD³² to play *Liberation* and was wondering how to get an A4000 keyboard as I can't get one out here?

What exactly does the Video Creator allow the user to do? And how/where can I get hold of the CD?

Brett Kirtan, Dapto, NSW, Australia

The FMV cart costs £200 in the UK, but with Commodore's current difficulties stocks have run out. The cart should be back in production by the end of the year, and you could always order one from the mail order companies such as Silica and Special Reserve, who advertise in *Amiga Format*. For the same reason A4000 keyboards are as rare as hen's teeth – at the moment, they're simply unobtainable.

The Video Creator (£39.95 from Almathera 081-687 0040) allows you to sequence Amiga graphics in time to an audio CD track – which effectively enables you to make your own music videos. Which makes a change from playing games...

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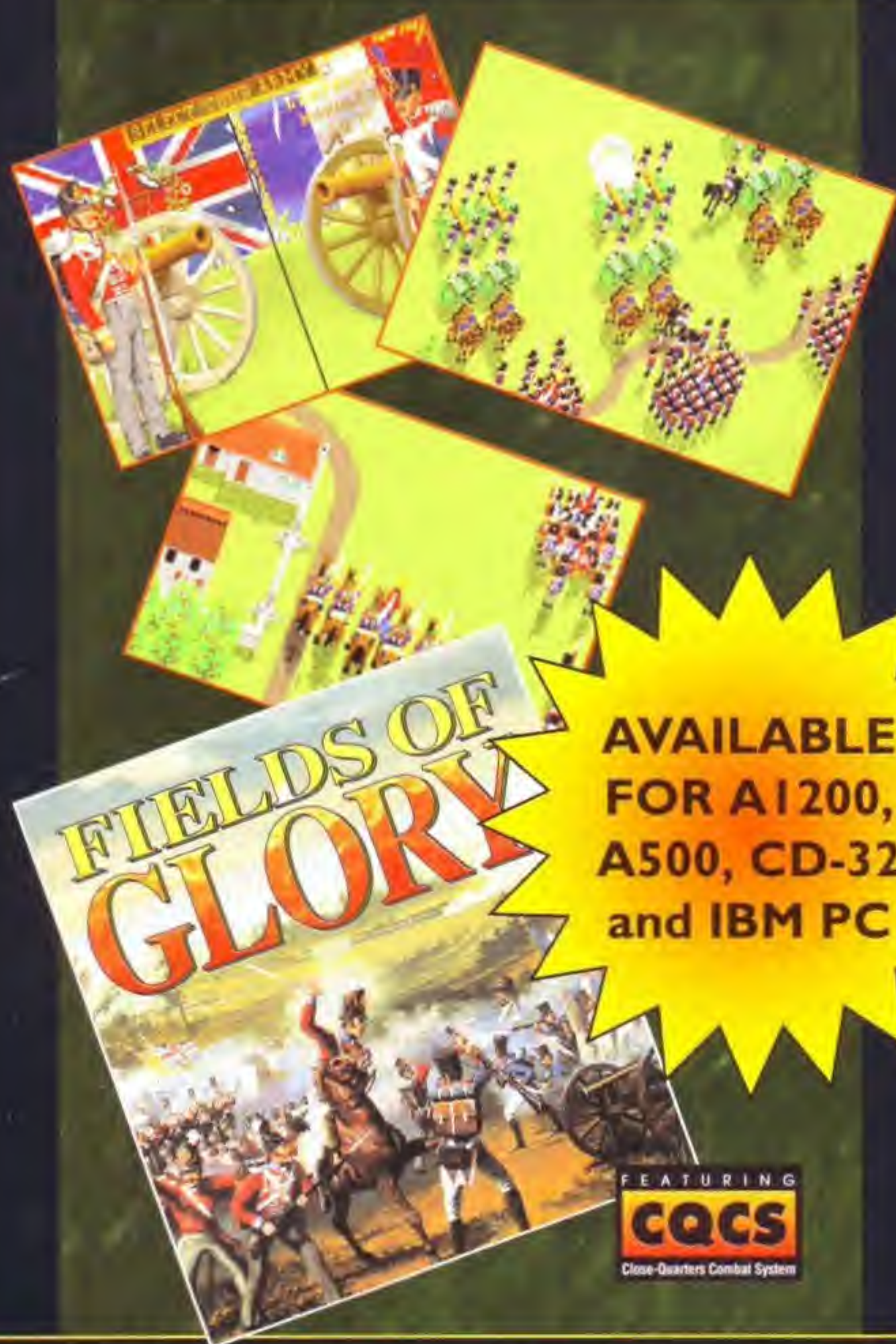
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